













*Animals of the Bill*

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## PREFACE

ADDRESSED TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

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To write even a few words of introduction to children, would I believe be useless, inasmuch as young people shun prefaces, as dry and uninteresting. In no case is it advisable to say much: but to elder persons I may perhaps be allowed to give a few words of explanation, respecting the design of this little work.

For some time past my own children have frequently asked me to write a book for them: deeming that what "Mamma" wrote would be more pleasing than ordinary books. They were already well-acquainted with Scripture narratives, so beautifully simplified in such works as "Peep of Day," "Line upon Line," etc., and now required, for Sunday reading, something more

## PREFACE

relating to the Bible. I sought in vain for what I wanted. I found many attractive Sunday books for the young: some on natural history,—very good as far as they go,—but which do not take in all I required. For instance,—I have not unfrequently met with works in which interesting things are related of lions, bears, eagles, locusts, serpents, etc., but none (as far as I know) which said something about every animal, bird, insect, reptile, etc., mentioned in Holy Writ. It was to interest my own children in each creature thus alluded to, that the following pages were written. How far they may prove equally interesting to other young readers, I know not. May I be allowed to say, it has been my aim to interest and instruct, and at the same time avoid that which might prove wearisome by dwelling too much on one subject.

I believe that by a less simple style of language, I might sometimes have introduced words or terms, calculated to render sentences less abrupt and more euphonious; but I did not write merely for critical approval, and think

that the young readers themselves, will prefer the book as it is, in its unpretending simplicity of language. I hope also that in Sunday schools, teachers may sometimes find this little volume of use, as I think the language will be clear enough even for those who have not had the advantages of a good education.

In conclusion, let me earnestly hope that my efforts to instruct may gain for my dear young readers some quiet Sunday hours; that the "continual dew of God's blessing" may ever rest upon them, their parents, and teachers: and that as they grow in years, they may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, and hereafter "be numbered with His saints in glory everlasting."

M. J. H. H.



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## ANIMALS OF THE BIBLE.

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THERE are many animals mentioned in the Bible, and these of very different kinds. There are tame and wild, clean and unclean animals ; some of them are gentle and useful servants to man, others are destructive and fierce, and occasionally used by God for the purpose of punishing wicked people for their sins.

God did not create animals until the sixth day (Gen. i. 24, 25), just before He formed man in His own image. God did not make the beasts, birds, and fishes, alone for the service of man, but for His own praise and glory, as you may read in Psalm cxlviii. 10. All the beasts, whether wild or tame, belong to God : He says, speaking by His Spirit, in one of the psalms, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee ;

for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." (Psa. l. 10—12.) From this, dear children, you see, not only are all beasts God's property, but He knows each one, however small, and provides for their wants and food.

After God had created Adam, and placed him in the garden of Eden, He brought before him all the beasts and birds to see what he would call them, and whatever names Adam gave them, by them they were afterwards known. (Gen. ii. 19, 20.) In those bright and happy days Adam knew no sin, and the wild beasts had not learnt to be fierce, bloody, and cruel, as many now are. There was no savage lion, roaring after the gentle lamb; no glaring-eyed tiger, seizing upon the harmless kid; no ravenous eagle, ready to pounce on the pretty partridge; or cruel hawk, wishing to kill the sweet-voiced little lark. All lived together in joy and harmony; but when Adam and Eve sinned, then both man and beasts became vicious and cruel, and have continued so ever since. But we read of a blessed time yet to come, when "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the

sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den." (Isa. xi. 6<sup>1</sup>—8; lxxv. 25.) And when shall this blessed time be?—When Jesus shall come to reign among His people. When wars and fightings shall cease, and when all nations shall know God, and His Gospel shall be spread abroad, even as the waters now cover the sea.

God gave Adam power over all fishes, birds, beasts, and insects (see Gen. i. 26, 27), and implanted, even in these dumb animals, a knowledge and fear of man as his master (Psa. viii. 7); which God again mentions after the flood, to Noah (Gen. ix. 2); at the same time telling him He had given to him and his seed, the beasts, fowls, and green herbs for food. There was one thing, however, that was forbidden. Man might eat the flesh of animals, but *not* the blood, because it was the life. Some people now use the blood of animals, believing that God only forbade it to the *Jews*. This is a mistake. Long before the Law was given to the Israelites, God forbade it to Noah. St. Paul also forbids the use of blood, after the Law of Moses had passed away. So you see God meant that always to be a law, as He also meant the Sabbath to be always kept, by speaking of it in different ages.

Can you tell me what is the great difference.

between beasts and men? It is not their four feet, or hairy coat, alone which makes the distinction. It is, that God has given man a soul as well as a body, which the beasts have not. They cannot speak or think; they have no understanding like ours; they can know nothing of Him who, in the beginning, formed them by the word of His power. And when they die, they perish for evermore. (See Psalm xlix. 12—15.) God has, however, given to beasts a kind of sense called instinct, which teaches them how to provide for themselves food; and a power to guard against danger to some extent, and also to provide for the comfort and safety of their young ones. More than this, most of them can understand kindness, and repay it with gratitude. Almost all animals may be tamed or subdued, however fierce naturally; and it is their instinct which gives them power to learn habits of obedience and submission. It is sad when we think how often the sins of man bring suffering upon the poor beasts, which know not why they suffer for want of food or water in times of famine and pestilence, sent by God to punish wicked persons. (See, for proofs, Joel i. 18—20. Haggai i. 11.)

Very early the skins of animals were made useful, and most likely they were killed for the purpose. When Adam and Eve sinned, they

needed clothes to cover themselves, and God Himself made them coats of the skins of beasts. (Gen. iii. 21.) Perhaps these clothes were made from the skins of the animals used in sacrifices, which God commanded as soon as Adam sinned; the shedding of the innocent animal's blood being to show them, and make them think, of the great Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, to take place many years after; which blood should save all who trusted in Him. If their coats were also made from the animals so slain, was it not a type of that robe of Christ's righteousness which He, our Great Sacrifice, has made, and which hides our sins and iniquities, as the skins hid the nakedness of Adam and Eve?


Very early God put distinctions between beasts: some He called clean, some unclean. When Noah went into the ark, he was to take seven of every kind of *clean* beast or bird, and only two each of the *unclean*. (Gen. vii. 2.) But it was not until Moses gave the Law, that we have a *list* given of their names,—about which I am going to tell you presently. The clean beasts only, of course, were used in *sacrifices*; but God *forbade*, in the Second Commandment, the likeness of *any* beast to be made or worshipped by man,—though, as you will remember, the command was constantly broken, not only by the heathen, but by the Jews themselves: while even



in this day of light and knowledge, there are still thousands—nay, millions—who worship beasts, birds, and reptiles, and know not “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

Solomon, the wisest of men, wrote a history of beasts. (1 Kings iv. 23.) Would you not like to have read that history? But unhappily it is lost, and therefore we cannot know what the wise man thought of animals. But there are many useful lessons to be learnt from these dumb creatures; many things in which, with only their imperfect knowledge, they put man to shame.

I will begin, then, with the clean animals of the Bible, and afterwards go on with the unclean, according to the list which Moses, in his Law, has given us.



## PART I.

### Clean Animals.

THE OX; HEIFER; BULL or BULLOCK;  
• COW or CALF.

• ALL these names refer to the same kind of animal, one of which, the cow, you know well by sight, and often partake also of the rich milk which she provides. The ox was a very common and useful animal in Palestine, and God promised to bless the increase of it, as it was so valuable to His people. (Deut. vii. 13; xxviii. 4.) Oxen always, therefore, formed a part of the riches of great people in early times: Abraham, Lot, Isaac, and Jacob, had many, and Job had five-hundred yoke of oxen. Joseph's brethren had many when they came into Egypt; and when the Israelites left that country, they had very many flocks and herds. Of all the tribes of Israel, however, Reuben and Gad seem to have had the greatest number of cattle; perhaps because they were less warlike, and had more time to attend

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to them. They had therefore land given to them on the east side Jordan, where there was plenty of grass for their flocks.

Persons who take care of oxen are called herdsmen: the Prophet Amos followed this occupation. The herdsmen used, for driving the animals, what is called an ox-goad. This goad is often mentioned in the Bible. It was a pole, nine or ten feet in length; at one end it had a sharp point, which was used both to urge on the oxen and also to guide and direct them, as they had no reins. This goad had, at the other end, a sort of chisel, or sharp knife, useful for cutting away weeds or thorns, in ploughing.

In certain days of Saul's reign, the Philistines had dominion over Israel, and took from them all their weapons except their goads,—for sharpening which they were allowed a file.\* When the Apostle Paul (then called Saul) was a wicked persecutor of good people, Jesus appeared to him on his journey, and said,—“I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” (Acts ix. 5.) Which means that he was rebelling against Jesus, even as an ox kicks against the goad, and in doing so, wounds itself far more than if it had received its correction quietly. So does the sinner, rebelling against God, make for himself a far heavier load of sin to bear hereafter.

Many and various are the uses of oxen—bulls and cows. Every part of them, even after death, is good for some purpose. 'But you may read about this on the week-day; my object now is only to tell you such things as shall lead you to understand what the Bible says about these creations.

We read in the Scriptures of oxen carrying burdens, drawing waggons, and ploughing. Elisha, when called by Elijah, was doing this work with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the last. This does not mean that he had twenty-four oxen all yoked to one plough, but that he, in company with other neighbours, were ploughing together. This is still done in Palestine, as the land is not divided into fields as it is in England. Oxen were also used for treading out the corn, that is, separating it from the chaff or rubbish; and in doing so God gave a command that their mouths were not to be muzzled (Deut. xxv. 4), fastened up, so as to prevent them from eating some of the food they were working to prepare for others. This is an emblem of God's ministers, who ought to be allowed to share the riches of those for whom they labour. Surely, all really good people will wish to show their gratitude to their ministers, by giving freely to them of their abundance. (See 1 Cor. ix. 9.) Oxen have always been much used for food. Under

the Mosaic law they were also constantly used for sacrifices. Of this I will tell you more presently. Though dumb creatures, oxen are not without quickness. The prophet (Is. i. 3), says, "The ox knoweth his owner," but complains that Israel did not know his God who had made him, and been so good to him. There are many laws in the Bible about the ox. Of these you may read in the Books of Moses. In the Fourth Commandment, the cattle were to have rest as well as man; and in the Tenth an especial command is given, that no one is to covet his neighbour's ox. Of course it was not to be worshipped, and yet how many times do we read of this command being disobeyed.

The Egyptians had their sacred bulls, and very soon after the Israelites left their own land in the wilderness, they made an image of a calf (which eats hay and grass) from their golden ornaments, and fell down and worshipped it. Jerobam made two golden calves, and placed them in Dan and Bethel,—one at each end of his kingdom,—and even helped to worship them himself. Very terrible were God's judgments for this sin, on both king and people. All the first-born of cows, belonging to the children of Israel, were to be the Lord's for sacrifice, as were the first-born of some other clean animals. Pieces of the flesh of oxen were sometimes sent

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to rouse the Israelites to battle. (See 1 Sam. xi. 7.) Solomon made a molten sea of brass, which stood upon twelve oxen (1 King vii. 25),—they being emblems of strength and power. There are many things in the Bible compared to animals of this kind. A foolish young man is said to be like an ox led to slaughter, when going into sin. (Prov. vii. 22, etc.) Bulls, which were often fierce and unmanageable, are compared to cruel enemies (as in Psa. xxii. 12). David says, “Many bulls have compassed me : strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.” (Also Psa. lxxviii. 30.) And repentant sinners are described as being like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, or harness, you would perhaps call it. (Jer. xxxi. 18.) Egypt and Ephraim are compared to fair heifers, in their sins. (Jer. xlv. 20 ; Hosea x. 11.) And Israel was said to be like a backsliding heifer : that means one which slips back instead of going straight forward. (Hosea iv. 16 ; x. 11.)

Some remarkable things are told us of kine, or cows. In Pharaoh’s dream, which Joseph explained to him, he saw fat and lean kine : these meant years of plenty and years of famine. And do you remember two poor cows who left their calves, and guided by God, took back the Ark to the Israelites ? If not, read it in 1 Sam., chapter v.

Calves were always considered delicate and,

good food. Abraham prepared a calf for the angels who visited him. The witch of En-dor, that wicked woman, who pretended to talk to spirits, killed and cooked one for king Saul, the night before his death. And do you not remember the prodigal son, who, when sorry for his sins, returned to his father, and for him the fatted calf was killed (Luke xv.) to show how pleased his father was to receive him home again?

There were very many sacrifices in which oxen, bullocks, etc. were used, but to tell you of them *all* would only confuse you. Rich men generally brought these animals as offerings, because they were more costly; those who were not so rich, brought sheep, or goats; and the poorest of all, turtle doves, or young pigeons. What is meant by the term "whole burnt-offering" is, that the whole animal was used for sacrifice, and burnt after it was killed; this was a type of Jesus Christ,—who offered Himself wholly for the sin of the world. The sin-offering, or sacrifice to atone or take away sin, was to be a young bullock; the blood of which, after it had been killed, the priest was to sprinkle seven times before the Lord, in a certain part of the sanctuary or holy place; after which he was to carry it *without* the camp (that means an *outside* place, away from the dwellings of the people), and burn it all, and then pour out its ashes

in a clean place. This also, dear children, was a remarkable type of Jesus Christ. He suffered and was crucified *outside* the walls of Jerusalem, to show that He was the Great Sacrifice, which, once offered, should for ever take away sin. The blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer could never take away sins (see Heb. x. 4), they were only a *shadow*, or sign, of what was to come; and were for ever done away, when the Son of God suffered on the cross. I could say many more things about the sacrifices, but I must leave them now; and tell you, for the present, about the animals offered, rather than the offerings, as you will, perhaps, understand them better.

#### THE SHEEP, RAM, AND LAMB.

THESE animals are perhaps more frequently alluded to than any other in the Bible: the sheep and lamb being emblems of innocence and peace; but—by their utter defencelessness—more frequently exposed to dangerous enemies than any others. After the cow, the sheep is the most serviceable of all animals to man. Its flesh is much eaten, and is called mutton. Its fat is useful for many things; and its wool is almost invaluable, so much clothing is made from it. The sheep of Palestine are somewhat different from those in our country. They have very long tails,



weighing many pounds ; and when the sheep are quite fat, they are so enormous, as often to be quite a burden to the poor animals. The fat of these tails is considered very rich and good ; it is often used instead of butter. There are so many lessons to be learnt from the sheep, that I fear I should tire you, if I mentioned them all ; so I must tell you only the chief ones.

You know that the person who takes care of sheep is called a shepherd. Abel was the first Bible-shepherd ; and he brought one of his flock as an offering to God, which is the first offering of which we read. The shepherd has no easy life in the East, where there are not only ravenous beasts to guard against, but robbers, who sometimes even now rush out and steal the sheep, which the faithful shepherd defends sometimes at the loss of his own life. Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd : the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." (John x. 11.) And did He not bleed and die for us upon the cross ? If we love Him, He graciously calls us His sheep. David says, in his lovely twenty-third Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd ; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ; He leadeth me beside the still waters." And, again, Isaiah says, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd ; He shall gather the lambs in His arms, and carry them in His bosom."

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This beautiful language is all true of earthly shepherds, who are types of Jesus. They have sometimes to find food for their sheep, even to cut leaves off the trees for them that they may have enough; and they know where to take them to the sweet, still waters, carrying the young lambs in their arms. So does Jesus spiritually feed His people, by putting peace and comfort into their hearts. Sheep go in flocks: and in England we see them driven on *before* their keeper; but where the Bible was written, the shepherd always goes *before* his sheep, and they follow after. He gives them all names, to which they answer, and they know his voice, but will not listen to a stranger. How beautifully Jesus speaks of this. Hear His words: "When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: *for they know* His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him," &c. (John x. 4, 5.) "I am the Good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."—"I lay down my life for the sheep." (John x. 14, 15.) Is not this, dear children, true both of Jesus, our Shepherd, and of those of us who are His sheep? In watching a flock of sheep following their shepherd, those who have seen them tell us, that a certain number of the sheep always keep near to the shepherd,—they follow close upon his foot.

steps ; and these sheep are ever the safest, and least in danger : they know they are near their best friend and protector. Wise sheep are these, and like those holy people of whom we read, that they follow "the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." (Rev. xvi. 4.) The nearer we keep to Jesus in prayer, and in our thoughts, the safer we are, and the further from that great roaring lion, the devil, "who goeth about seeking whom he may devour." Again, there are other sheep who, instead of keeping close to the shepherd, are restless ; first running in one direction, then in another, so that they are far more likely to get into difficulty. Others there are who are so prone to wander, that they require, not only to be sharply scolded, but sometimes even a stone thrown at them *to hurt* them, and prevent them straying to their own destruction ; and some there are which will wander even after this, and are lost altogether. Are there not many people who wander from their Saviour, who do not want to walk along the path He marks out for them, but who choose bye-paths which lead them into danger,—sometimes even eternal death ? How often does Jesus send sorrow and trouble to bring back and remind these wandering ones, that they are going wrong ! Sometimes they hear His voice, or feel the wound He gives. Sometimes they will not return to Him. c

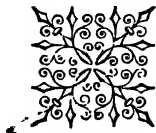
You have heard of sheep-folds, places in which to keep the sheep on cold nights, and to preserve them from wild beasts. These folds have high walls all round them, and sharp thorns on the top to prevent enemies leaping over. Wolves cannot then get in ; though leopards have sometimes been known to leap over, when very hungry. Even so the Church of Christ, which is His fold, and to which you all by being baptized belong in name, is not safe from enemies at all times. So long as the Church is on earth, the devil will work mischief ; though the sheep need not fear, if they will but call out in *earnest* to their Shepherd to help them. He is stronger than all enemies. There are many shepherds mentioned in the Bible ; and to be rich in sheep was considered a great blessing. Jacob kept Laban's sheep. His sons were shepherds. Moses was keeping Jethro's sheep, when God appeared to him in the burning bush. David was a shepherd-boy before he was King of Israel ; and at one time he killed both a lion and a bear, when they attacked his sheep. And of course you remember the shepherds of Bethlehem, to whom that glorious company of angels appeared one bright starlight night, as they kept their flock, and proclaimed the birth of a Saviour who should save His people from their sins.

Sheep (or rams, which are the male animals).

were constantly used in very large numbers for sacrifice. When King Solomon dedicated (or opened) his beautiful temple at Jerusalem, he sacrificed one hundred and twenty thousand sheep besides twenty-two thousand oxen. (1 Kings viii. 63.) But sheep were very plentiful in the East, and are to this day; and rich men possessed many thousands. The rams were generally slain; and their skins dyed red. They were thus used for making part of the tabernacle in the wilderness. Do you remember the first mention of the ram? It was in that beautiful story of Abraham's obedience, when about to offer up his only son at God's command: but God, when He saw his faith, told him he need not, and provided a ram; which, caught by his horns in a thicket, was taken and offered in Isaac's place. The first-born of sheep were, under the Law of Moses, always to be given to God in sacrifice: and this should teach us, when God has given us riches, we should give him a *first* portion from them. Sheep are often used as emblems. Thus they were types of the Jewish nation (see Psalm lxxviii. 52, etc.); and often of Jesus, who was to be led "as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb." (Isaiah liii. 7.) False prophets were like wolves in sheep's clothing; appearing outwardly mild and harmless, but inwardly wicked and cruel. And

in one of our Saviour's discourses, he compares the righteous, in the day of judgment, to sheep,—which shall be on God's *right* hand; and the wicked to goats, on the *left*. (Matt. xxv. 32, 33.) I trust, dear children, you will all be on the *right* hand, when that awful day shall come. Lambs are the young of sheep, and Jesus calls children His lambs; and in His last command to Peter, Jesus tells him, not only to feed His sheep, but His lambs. A lamb was especially a type of Jesus. He is called "The Lamb of God." (John i. 36) When the Israelites ate the Passover, a lamb was the food chosen to make them think of Jesus, who should save them hereafter from their sins. A lamb was killed also every morning and evening by the Jewish high priest, constantly to remind the people of this. And from earliest ages a *lamb* was stamped upon the money they used. Jacob had this image on his money. You will see what I mean by looking at Genesis xxxiii. 19, in the margin or reference, on the right side of the verse. There is a beautiful parable of a little ewe lamb, told by the prophet Nathan to David. You may read it in 2 Sam. xii. And, lastly, do you ever think of that vision St. John saw of a Lamb in heaven, standing on Mount Sion, even Jesus, and "with Him an hundred and forty and four thousand, having His Father's.

name written in their foreheads." (Rev. xiv. 1.) That holy band were those who had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and who "stand on a sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb," etc. (Rev. xv. 2, 3.) Dear children, I trust you will sometime sing that song, and be of that blessed number who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. (Rev. xiii. 8.)



## Clean Animals.

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### PART II.

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#### THE GOAT AND KID.

THE GOAT is not so well known in England as the sheep, yet it is somewhat like it in size, shape, and habits. Instead of wool it has hair for a covering, and a beard under its chin, and horns on its head, which, in danger, it sometimes uses for defending itself. The goat of Palestine has also very long ears, and is of a reddish brown colour; so that it is unlike the goat we generally see in England. It is very hardy and active. It can climb high mountains, and is so sure-footed, that it can get over the steepest rocks and places without danger. It is far less cowardly than the ~~sheep~~, and can endure cold and heat in extremes much better also. When in flocks, one male goat always leads the rest; in this they differ from sheep, who depend upon the shepherd to guide them. (Jer. l. 8.) The goat can eat all kinds of herbs, but likes best the bark and boughs of young trees. Its milk is much used, and is rich and strengthen-



ing. It is more ready to be friendly with man than the sheep; yet it prefers solitude, and loves to live on the wild mountains, and among the lonely rocks. Its skin is made into leather; and the kid's skin (or *young* goat's) is made into ladies' gloves. Goats' skins were also used for clothing. St. Paul tells us, in that beautiful chapter,—the eleventh of Hebrews,—of the persecuted Christians of old, who “wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy): they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.” This means that wicked people were so cruel to those who loved God and His truth, that they could get no clothes but skins; and for fear of death, had to live in wild places where they could not be found. Let us thank God that we do not live in times when our faith has to be so tried. Should we be fit to endure such trials for the sake of Jesus? Let us ask Him to make us ready to leave all, if needful, for His sake.

Little kids were considered delicious food. Do you remember the savory meat which Rebekah made for Jacob to take to Isaac? It was made from a kid, and so good that the old blind father thought it was venison (or deer's flesh); and by this savory meat Jacob deceitfully ob-

tained his father's blessing, instead of Esau. God would have made Jacob's way clear for him had he waited; and God afterwards punished him, by allowing his own sons to deceive him, and tell lies to him about their brother Joseph.

The hair of the goat was very much used in ancient times. Women spun it into curtains for the tabernacle in the wilderness. (Exodus xxxv. 26; xxxvi. 14.) Pillows for beds were made of it (see Sam. xix. 26). Jesus, when He calls His church His bride, says that her "*hair* is as a flock of goats, that appear from Mount Gilead." (Song of Solomon iv. 1.) The goat was the emblem of the Macedonian Empire. And in Daniel's vision, he saw a he-goat, very powerful and strong, sniting and trampling down other animals: this he-goat meant Alexander the Great, of whom you perhaps have read in ancient history. That mighty king who conquered almost all the world *then known*, and is said to have wept when he had done so, because he had no more worlds left to conquer. How much better would it have been, if, instead of fighting and shedding the blood of his fellow-creatures, he had fought under Christ's banner against the world, the flesh, and the devil; and, by seeking to spread the knowledge of God, turned many from sin and death. But, alas! he

was a heathen king, and knew not the knowledge of God, neither had he faith in the Saviour who was afterwards to be born to save man. The wild goat is mentioned in the Bible, as well as the goat usually seen. It is generally called the ibex, and has splendid horns on its head, and lives entirely among the mountains. It is larger and stronger than the common goat, and of a fiercer nature. It is very dangerous work hunting the ibex; for sometimes, when pressed hard by the hunter on the steep cliffs, it will suddenly turn round, face its enemy, and with its horns dash him over the cliff, where he is soon killed. Perhaps this is why the *wicked* are sometimes compared to goats, in contrast to the gentle innocent sheep. These goats generally lived in small flocks, on the steepest and highest cliffs. There were many about the mountains of En-gedi, where David hid himself from Saul. En-gedi means "fountain of the goats;" and most likely took its name from the numbers of these animals found there. These goats were clean, and good for food. They lived on grass and herbs, and consequently their flesh was wholesome and nourishing.

Very early times goats were used as sacrifices. Abraham offered a she-goat with other animals, when God made a covenant with him. (Gen. xv. 19.) And a goat might be used instead of a lamb

for the Passover Supper. The chief sacrifice of goats, however, was on the Day of Atonement, which happened once a year,—in the seventh month; which was to be a very solemn and holy time, even as the seventh day was to be sacred. Atonement means an agreement for a sin committed. Jesus made atonement for us, by agreeing to put away the sins of the world, by dying and bearing the curse instead of man. This Sacrifice of Atonement was a solemn type of Jesus,—the Great Sacrifice,—and would keep the Jews constantly in remembrance of His promised coming. Almost all heathen nations have an idea of *atonement*. They feel they have sinned, for God has given them a *conscience* which reminds them of this. Missionaries tell us, that heathens far away worshipping idols, and knowing not our God, have sacrifices of some kind to atone for sin. On this day of Jewish atonement, two goats were to be taken. (Lev. xvi. 6—10.) One was chosen by lot, in a way which would show which God pleased it to be. It was to be killed by the priest, and its blood sprinkled on the mercy-seat, and with the priest's finger seven times on the horns of the altar. This the priest did alone. None of the people were allowed to be present. Jesus Christ *alone* made atonement for sin, of which this offering was a type. The other goat was then to be brought

out before the people, who waited<sup>6</sup> in awe and silence, while the high priest put his hands on the head of the goat, and confessed over it the many sins and iniquities of the people of Israel. This, dear children, was like the sins of the world<sup>7</sup> which were laid upon Jesus. The goat, meek, innocent, and sinless, stood there and received this burden upon it. Isaiah says of Jesus, "The Lord hath laid on *Him* the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah liii. 6.) The goat was then led away by a suitable person, far off into the



The Scape Goat.

wilderness, left alone in a barren and desolate place, forsaken by its companions, and by man, with the roar of wild beasts sounding in its ears, without food, without water, without refuge. What became of this scape-goat, as it was called, no one knew. God's anger rested on it, as it did on Jesus, when He bore our sins. Perhaps God killed it by a sharp stroke of lightning; perhaps, trembling, hungry, and cold, it laid down at last and died, uncared for, unpitied. We do not know its end; but we know that it is like Jesus, who bore our sins, and carried our sorrows; and who casts all the sins of those who believe and trust in Him behind His back. The scape goat is one of the strongest types of the atonement of Jesus, therefore, never forget it. Remember, also, how before His death He was driven into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil for forty days and forty nights: how He resisted all Satan's attacks, and for our sakes bore hunger and temptation. The Church has wisely set apart six weeks every year, for more especial thoughts of the temptation and atonement of Jesus. This season is called Lent. Some people keep it as a fast, and will not eat any meat during that time, thinking this will please God. But God does not care for this kind of fasting. He has given us, in Isa. lviii. 5—7, a beautiful description of how He desires such solemn times

to be spent. I hope, therefore, dear children, that when Lent comes round you will think more especially of Jesus,—His sufferings and redemption; though I trust you will bear in mind these all-important things at *all* seasons of the year, for if you have not an interest in Christ's atoning sacrifice, remember, you can have no place in heaven.

#### THE HART AND HIND.

THESE are beautiful animals, of the deer kind. They were clean, because they parted the hoof (or foot) and chewed the cud; which means eating over again in a peculiar manner the food they had before swallowed. All animals that chew the cud live on vegetable food. The name of hart is not given to this animal until it is six years old, when it is considered full-grown. In its fifth year it is called a stag. The hart is the male, the hind the name of the female of this beautiful creature. Numbers of them are found in Palestine, where they may be seen leaping and skipping upon the hills, or feeding among the lilies. Jesus is thus compared to these graceful creatures in the Song of Solomon ii. 7—9: "The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills; my beloved is like the roe or the young hart," etc. And again, "My beloved (that is Jesus) is

mine, and I am his : he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether." (Ver. 16, 17).

Ah! dear children, this language is a type of a believer's feelings towards Jesus. Ask yourselves, is He your beloved, do you love Him dearer than all besides? If not, pray in the words of another verse of this beautiful song:—"Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices" (chap. viii. 14); which means, pray that Jesus, by His Spirit, will quickly come and dwell in your heart; so shall you have rest and peace, as the hart among the sweet spicy flowers of the mountains. When Jacob blessed his sons he compared Naphtali with "a hind let loose; he giveth goodly words." A free hind was a beautiful sight, playing on the hills. Besides being a graceful animal, God has endowed it with an acute smell and excellent hearing. It still abounds among the ancient hills of Naphtali's tribe, though, alas! no sons of Naphtali now are there to see its agile movements, or note the soft, almost tearful, glance of its soft, full, liquid eyes. No! they are gone; and none but God knows where these lost sons of Israel are, who are still bearing their heavy punishment, far,

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away from their own bright land, and from their fathers' God. Let us pray that the time may soon come, when once again all Israel shall be gathered to their land, and God, even their own God, shall give them His blessing.

The swiftness and safe-footedness of the hart is often spoken of in the Bible. One of David's nephews, called Asahel, we read "was light of foot as a wild roe." David, speaking of the strength God gave to him, says, "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet" (Psalm xviii. 33); and the prophet Habakkuk beautifully concludes his prophecy by saying, "The Lord is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places." There is in the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, a sweet description of that blessed time when the kingdoms of the world have become the kingdoms of Jesus Christ, and in one verse we read, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, Then shall the lame man *leap as an hart*, and the tongue of the dumb sing," etc. (Vers. 5, 6.) What a time will that be when even the now barren desert "shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." (Ver. 1.) The hind is very affectionate and loving, so she is compared with a good wife by Solomon. "Let her be," he says, "as the loving hind and pleasant roe."

(Prov. v. 19.) • The hind was very tender to her young, and it was only in times of great famine when she was induced to forsake her little ones. So Jeremiah speaks of her. (Chap. xiv. 5.) When the people of Judah went into captivity the same prophet compares them with harts that can find no pasture. (Lam. i. 6.) But perhaps the most beautiful verse with regard to holy people, in which the hart is used in comparison, is in Psa. xlii. 1. "As the hart *panteth* after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." To pant is to breathe hard, to pine, to long for, very, very much. The hart does not drink much in the colder part of the year, but in the heat of summer it is sometimes sadly distressed for water, and parched and panting, it seeks eagerly the cool refreshing stream, there to drink that it may not perish. So does holy David feel to long for God, his spirit pines after the waters of grace. Jesus Christ says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

THE ROEBUCK, or ROE DEER, was another animal which the Jews were allowed to eat (it is called the gazelle of Syria), mentioned in Deut. xiv. 5. In many points it is like the hart, or stag, though lighter and smaller. The colour of the back is of reddish brown; the chest and body yellowish, and the hinder parts white. It

is remarkably graceful and active, and can bound for a great distance without feeling fatigue. Some of these pretty creatures may still be seen in Scotland, lying amongst the heather, but they generally prefer a more wooded country. They love solitude, and are never entirely tamed. Other kinds of deer go in herds, different families mingling together. But the roebucks keep to themselves and their fawns, and wish for no other associates. In this we see a beautiful picture of family contentment. How pleasant it is to see families living in love and peace, and seeking their happiness in each other, and by this means being kept from much evil and temptation. Many things mentioned in the Bible about the roe apply equally to the hart and the hind, as I have told you before.

THE PYGARG, or LIDMU, is a kind of antelope, noted for its double-sized horns and great strength. It is about the size of the roebuck, with specks of white in its skin. It is, however, never alluded to but in one verse in the Bible (Deut. xiv. 5), as a clean animal.

THE WILD OX is a kind of stag.—Deut. xiv. 5. Its proper name is the ORYX. It is a noble and beautiful animal. Its horns are nearly straight, and three feet in length. It has white hair, with various colors marked on it in different parts of its body. It is a very daring animal, and when

pursued can fight well with its horns, and be very fierce.

THE CHAMOIS. Some people suppose that the chamois means the giraffe, but I do not think it very probable, as the giraffe must have been quite unknown in the Holy Land, for it inhabits only very hot regions. The chamois is a kind of small antelope, which lives among high mountains, and walks and leaps along the ridges of steep places with wonderful safety. The chamois generally live together in small flocks, very high in the mountains. They can see, smell, and hear, with remarkable quickness, and are wonderful in escaping from danger. They feed upon herbs and flowers, or young shoots of trees, and their flesh is very excellent for food. Of their skin useful leather is made, and many pretty things are manufactured from their horns.

The chamois hunter must be a man of great patience and caution, otherwise he could never succeed in the chase. He is often led into extreme danger and peril in hunting after these animals, sometimes, indeed, losing life itself. What pains men will take for an earthly possession, yet how slow they are in seeking for the things of heaven, which are far better.

THE FALLOW DEER is often seen in English parks, where it is a great ornament. It is a sort of yellow brown, spotted with white, and has

beautiful branching horns. It is neither so strong nor so brave as the stag, but its disposition is more gentle, and its flesh is considered excellent food, and called venison. When tame it will even eat out of the hands of those who are kind to it. Its horns and skin are of great use, but you may read of this in books on natural history. Herds of deer are always led by one male animal, which all the others obey, and give way at his approach. We may learn a lesson from these animals, of obedience and trust. Should we not follow our spiritual leader,—even Jesus, and not wish to go in paths of our own seeking? Yet how apt are we to forget this great guide and leader! Let us pray that we may follow Him fully.



## Unclean Animals.

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### PART III.

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#### THE ASS OR DONKEY.\*

THIS was an unclean animal. It did not part the hoof or chew the cud, and all such were to be regarded as unclean by the Jews. Even to this day in Palestine, though the Jewish law has passed away, the difference between clean and unclean animals, with few exceptions, is still regarded. There are two distinct kinds of asses, and both are frequently spoken of in the Bible.

The wild ass lives in desert places, and is very difficult to tame. It is larger and more graceful than the common ass.\* In winter it migrates, or goes into a warmer climate, and in summer returns northward. Who taught this wild creature the knowledge that at certain seasons it should change its residence? Surely God gave it the instinct or power to do this. Job makes constant allusions to the wild ass. In one place he says, "who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the

wild ass? whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing." (Job xxxix. 5—8.) Isaiah also speaks of the fondness of this animal for loneliness, when he mentions the desolations of the land of his people. He says, "the forts and towers shall be dens for ever, a joy of wild asses," etc. (Isa. xxxii. 14.) When the wicked king Nebuchadnezzar was punished by being made a madman until he owned God's power, "His heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses," etc. (Dan. v. 21.) The Psalmist speaks of God's care for these creatures' thirst: he says, "He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field, and the *wild asses* quench their thirst." (Psa. civ. 10, 11.) The Tartars and Persians are very fond of eating the wild ass, and hunt it accordingly. When tamed, which is very difficult, it is as useful, active, and swift, as the horse. It is frequently compared with wicked or rebellious people, in the Bible. Jeremiah says that Israel, in his love for idols, was like "A wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure." (Jer. ii. 24.)

The tame ass is a very different animal to the wild one. It is patient, enduring, and contented. Some people say it is obstinate, and stupid, and it may be so sometimes; but how much of these bad habits are encouraged by the cruel, rough way in which it is used. Often have tears risen in my eyes to see the cruel manner in which both men and boys have treated this patient animal, beating and pulling it as if it had no feeling at all. How I wish all people would remember the words of the Bible,—“A good man is merciful to his beast.” In eastern countries the ass is thought of and valued quite as much as the horse; it is more useful for travellers in the mountainous districts of Palestine, as it can climb rough and steep places with far greater safety than the horse, and is also stronger in proportion to its size. It is so superior an animal in the east, that we must believe the better treatment and food it there receives, are the reasons why it is so much more intelligent and active than with us. From what Solomon says of it, we cannot help thinking that naturally the ass requires the whip less than the horse, though perhaps it has less quickness in finding its way. Perhaps you know the verse,—“A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool’s back.” (Prov. xxvi. 3.) The patriarchs, or great men of very early times, had many



asses, as well as sheep and oxen. Abraham had, and rode on one when he went that sad journey, believing at the end of it he should have to offer up his only son Isaac. Jacob was rich in these animals; and Joseph, when providing for his old father's journey, sent asses laden with the good things of Egypt as provisions for him to eat by the way. Job had five hundred she-asses, seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen. Asses were used for various things in Bible times, as they are now. Both men and women rode on them. Perhaps you have read of the woman who was so kind to Elisha, and to whom God gave a little boy, for the prophet's sake: he died afterwards from what is called a sun-stroke, or sudden illness brought on from the sun's heat. When her child was dead, she immediately rode on an ass to go to Elisha, because she wished to see him quickly. (This beautiful story is written in 2 Kings iv.) To ride on *white* asses was a sign of honour and riches, and in the Book of Judges you may several times read of relations of the judges who rode on these animals.

Sometimes even asses were used in war. (See 2 Kings vii 7—10.) Isaiah speaks several times of the uses of the ass (Isa. xxx. 24); and he saw a vision of chariots of asses. (Isa. xxi. 7.) He tells us that as the ox knoweth his owner, so

does the ass "his master's crib," or stable (Isa. i. 3): showing that it was not without instinct and quickness. ,

There were many laws about the ass in the time of Moses. If it went astray it was to be brought back by those who found it, to its master. If it was too much burdened, and fell down under its load, it was to be helped to rise again by passers by. It was not to work on Sunday, neither was it to be coveted; as you will remember in the Fourth and Tenth Commandments. Being an unclean animal, of course it was not to be eaten; but on one occasion, when Samaria was besieged, and the people were perishing with hunger, the ass was eaten, and its head alone was sold for *eighty pieces of silver*. Indeed, at that fearful time, we read of a woman who boiled and ate her own son, (2 Kings vi. 25.) When the ass was dead, it was thrown out as a loathsome and unholy thing, outside the walls of Jewish cities. It was in reference to this that Jeremiah the prophet spoke of the wicked king Jehoiakim of Judah, who was to die unloved and unlamented, and to be "buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem." (Jer. xxii. 19.) What a shocking end!

When Jacob blessed his sons he compared Issachar with "a strong ass (Gen. xlix. 14)

crouching between two burdens : " which meant that Issachar's 'portion' in the Holy Land should be between two enemies, who should make him pay for living in peace ; and this happened, as I may tell you at greater length some other time.

Of course you remember Balaam's ass, and how it spoke to, and rebuked, its wicked master. (Numb. xxii. 28.) Also how Samson killed a thousand men with the jaw-bone of an ass. (Jud. xv. 16.) Of the disobedient prophet, too,



The disobedient prophet.

who rode on an ass to Bethel, to take God's message to wicked Jeroboam, but who afterwards disobeyed God and was slain by a lion, which did not touch the ass, because God intended to show it was His punishment on the sinner. (1 Kings xiii. 24.)

Saul was seeking for his father's asses when Samuel saw him, and told him how God had chosen him to be king of Israel. But the greatest and most interesting event connected with the ass, was on that day when Jesus rode upon one into Jerusalem. Multitudes followed Him, with branches of palms in their hands, crying out, and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest." (Matt. xxi. 9.) And Jesus, even the Son of God, when He drew near to Jerusalem, that beloved city, *wept over it*, because of its sins, and of His knowledge of the awful punishments that should come upon it, because it had rejected its Lord and King. If the poor deluded Jews had but listened to the words of their prophets, they must then have known that Jesus was indeed their King. Hundreds of years before, Zechariah had written these words, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; *lowly*, and riding upon an ass,

and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." (Zech. ix. 9.) How completely was this prophecy fulfilled when Jesus rode upon an ass into Jerusalem. Why did not the Jews receive their Saviour and King? Because their hearts were proud. They wanted a great and rich king, who should subdue their enemies, restore their kingdom, and make them great on earth. They cared not for those blessed truths, those spiritual riches, which flowed from the lips of Jesus; and therefore God left them in their blindness and sin, to the awful desolation which afterwards came upon them. My dear little friends, do not be like the Jews, and refuse to let the humbling lessons which the Bible teaches, find a place in your hearts, lest at last God should take from you His good Spirit, and say in His wrath that you, like the Jews, shall not enter heaven.

#### THE LION.

I NEVER yet met with any children who had not a great admiration for the lion, and the greatest desire to see it, and hear its terrible roar which makes almost all other beasts tremble. Who does not know that the lion is tawny-colored, has a tremendously large head and mane, a long tail, and that he is called, "The king of beasts?" I do not doubt you all know this; but I wonder how much you know of the Bible stories

and lessons about this animal. You have heard, I daresay, that it is a ravenous beast of prey, or one that kills other animals to provide itself with food. Some travellers, however, tell us that it does not attack people unless really hungry. It seeks its prey at night, and hides itself when about to spring upon its victim: it can bound to a distance of even twenty feet if needful. The wicked who lie in wait to deceive have thus been compared with a lion: while again the righteous are said to be bold as a lion. (Prov. xxviii. 1.) The lion is called, in Prov. xxx. 30, the strongest of beasts; by which is meant that it is the strongest for its size. It is said that one stroke of its huge paw will break the back of a horse. The lion can be tamed, and is said to be grateful to those who are kind to it. The finest lions are in Africa, though many are still found in parts of Asia. They live in dens, forests, thickets (Jer. iv. 7), deserts, and mountains. (Song of Solomon iv. 8.) They used to be found in Palestine, and we read that to punish the Samaritans for their idolatry, God sent them a plague of lions to destroy them. (1 Kings xvii. 25, 26.) They also frequently attacked sheep-folds, and made great destruction among the flocks. Amos (iii. 12) and Micah (v. 8) both allude to this in their writings. David killed a lion when a shepherd boy. The lion is so

often mentioned in the Bible it would be impossible to tell you even half that is said of it, but you might find much pleasure in looking through your Bibles and finding out all the verses which allude to them. God's care in providing food for lions you will find in *Psa. civ. 21—28*. Its great teeth are spoken of in *Psa. lviii. 6*, and in *Joel i. 6*. And when the wicked men who had spoken against Daniel were thrown into the den of lions from which he had been taken, we are told that the lions broke all their bones before ever they came to the bottom of the pit ; for the lion's teeth are so strong they often break and eat both bones and flesh together. Samson, the strongest of men, killed a lion, and tore it as if it had been only a young kid ; and Benaiah also, a mighty man of valour in David's time, went down into a pit on a snowy day, and attacked a lion there, and killed it ; he also slew two lion-like men of Moab, which means brave men, so that he must have had great strength and power. I have told you of the disobedient prophet riding on an ass, who was killed by a lion ; but there was a second case mentioned in *1 Kings xx. 35, 36*. A prophet was told by God to desire a man to strike him for a sign of evil. The man refused, which was wrong, so for his disobedience the prophet declared he should be slain by a lion ; and "as-soon as he

had departed, a lion found him and slew him." You see how God punishes disobedience, even in this world, dear children. When the Jews sinned God also threatened them by the mouth of His prophet Jeremiah, saying, "Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces; because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased." (Jer. v. 6.) The same prophet, speaking of the punishments God would bring upon Edom, says,—“Behold he (Edom) shall come up like a lion from the swellings of Jordan, against the habitation of the strong; but I will make him suddenly run away from her,” etc. (Jer. xlix. 19.) This meant that lions were in the habit of living among thickets on the banks of the river, but when the water overflowed its banks in harvest time, the lions, furious and angry, were roused from their hiding-place, and had to rush away lest they should be drowned in the swellings of the water. So Edom, thinking to come up furiously against other nations, should suddenly be stopped by God's power. Job (xxviii. 8; x. 16) often speaks of the lion, also Isaiah, Nahum, and other prophets, of which I have not time now to tell. Solomon made an ivory throne for himself and “overlaid



it with the best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind; and there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays: and *twelve* lions stood there on the one side and on the other, upon the six steps: and there was not the like made in any kingdom." (1 Kings x. 18—20.) These lions were representatives of majesty and power.

Three of the tribes of Israel are compared with lions. "Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?" (Gen. xlix. 9.) This was part of Jacob's prophecy, and meant how powerful and great the tribe of Judah should become. Moses, before he died, blessed the tribes, and spake of Gad:—"He dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head." (Deut. xxxiii. 20) And of Dan he said,—"*Dan is a lion's whelp*," or young one, "he shall leap from Bashan;" and this tribe afterwards had its portion near the hills of Bashan. When Saul and his son Jonathan were slain, in David's lamentation he says of them, "they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." (2 Sam. i. 23.) God compares Himself with a lion, in the strength with which He will fight for Mount Zion. (Isa. xxxi. 4.) But I must only

mention two more passages in which comparisons are made from the lion, or I may tire you. One is 1 Peter v. 8, where the apostle warns us against the devil, who, he says, "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

In Rev. v. 5, Jesus Christ is called "the lion of the tribe of Judah," "the root of David." He came from this tribe, and the lion of Judah means the strength of His people. And He is so still. Powerful, far more powerful than the lion, He will give us of His strength if we wish it and ask for it, and preserve from the attacks of that great enemy, who is still going about like a hungry beast, seeking whose souls he may destroy.

#### THE CAMEL AND DROMEDARY.

THESE are animals about which I could tell you much; but, again, I fear I can only mention a few of the many interesting things about them. If you have not all seen these animals, I doubt not you know the pictures of a camel, with its two large humps on its back, and the dromedary, like it in every respect, but having one hump instead of two. The camel has been called the "Ship of the desert;" God, in His wisdom and goodness, has so fitted it for carrying burdens across the barren plain. It has soft spongy feet, for walking on the sand: peculiar nostrils, for keeping it from getting

into its nose ; and above all, it can go for seven or eight days without water,—having a bag in its stomach in which it can keep additional water, and use a little when it wants to quench its thirst. It is remarkable for patience and endurance, and will sometimes go on carrying its heavy burden without complaining, until it sinks down and dies. The dromedary, or Arabian camel, is very swift: when burdened, it goes about thirty miles a-day, but if only used for riding, it can travel sixty, or even *ninety*. Jeremiah speaks of its swiftness (Jer. ii. 23): and Isaiah of burdens carried on its haunches (Isa. xxx. 6): also of its drawing chariots (Isa. xxi. 7). It is satisfied with the coarsest food, and is docile and gentle, except when very badly treated.

Every part of this valuable animal is useful. Its milk is rich and nourishing ; its flesh, though unclean to the Jews, is much eaten by the Arabs, and tastes like veal. Of its skin tents are made. Even its internal parts are used for fuel ; while from its hair a kind of cloth called Camlet is made ; and perhaps you will remember that it was said of John the Baptist, “his raiment was of camels’ hair.” (Matt. iii. 4.)

Very early we read of people rich in camels :—Abraham (Gen. xii. 16) : Jacob (Gen. xxx. 30) : and Job, who had 3,000 stolen from him by the Chaldeans. When Abraham’s servant, Eleazer,

went to seek a wife for Isaac, he took camels, and made them kneel down by a well, while he prayed to God to show him what he was to do. (Gen. xxiv. 11.) And when he brought Rebekah to Isaac, she and her maidens rode on camels. When Joseph was sold to the Ishmaelites, we read they were going with camels laden with merchandise to Egypt. (Gen. xxxvii. 25.) When Joseph's mother, Rachel, left her father, Laban, to follow Jacob, her husband, she stole her father's images, and hid them in the camel's furniture, or saddle and trappings, and sat upon them, so that they could not be found. (Gen. xxxi. 34.)

Many nations went to war on camels. In Gideon's time, the Midianites who came up against Israel, had camels without number. (Judges vi. 5.) Isaiah also speaks of the dromedaries of Midian as being so numerous. (Isaiah lx. 6.)

The tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half tribe of Manasseh, took from their enemies, the Hagarites, no less than *fifty thousand* camels; God giving them that great victory because they prayed to Him to help them. (1 Chron. v. 21.) King Asa also took many camels from the Ethiopians. (2 Chron. xiv. 15.) When Benhadad, king of Syria, sent to enquire of Elijah the prophet, he sent forty camels laden with good things,

to the man of God, as a present from Damascus. (2 Kings viii. 9.) Camels were also used to convey letters and messages. (Esther viii. 10.) And people sometimes escaped from battle upon them. Four hundred young Amalekites thus rode away from David once, when he was pursuing them for their cruelty and wickedness to him and his people. (1 Sam. xxx. 17.) Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian, fled from Israel on camels with splendid ornaments upon them, which were taken by Gideon. (Judges viii.) Camels were generally kept by kings in the East in the same manner as our sovereigns keep horses. (1 Chron. xxvii. 30.) The queen of Sheba, who travelled so far to see and hear Solomon's wisdom, had many camels in her train. Jesus Christ twice spoke of camels. Once when reproving the Pharisees, He said, "Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." (Matt. xxiii. 24.) This meant that the Pharisees were particular in *little* things, while in great and important ones they acted wickedly, and neglected them. The other time was when that rich young man came to Jesus and asked what he must do to be saved. Jesus saw he loved his riches, and therefore told him to sell all his possessions and give them to the poor, and He would give him treasure in heaven; and he was to come and follow Him. Ah! sad to

say, that young man *went away* and left Jesus: he loved his *money better* than his Saviour, though he went away sorrowful. Then Jesus told His disciples, how difficult it was for a rich man to enter heaven: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." (Matt. xix. 24.) Do you understand this? The eye of a needle does not mean a needle for sewing with, but, in Eastern cities, there was often a small gate called a "needle's eye." Through this gate camels sometimes entered; but this they could not do burdened, because it was so low. They must therefore stoop down and have their burden removed from them, and thus crawl through with difficulty. Even so, dear children, must those who have riches, be willing to stoop down and leave them in the world, or outside the gate of heaven, before they can enter that blessed place. The words of our beautiful Burial Service are,— "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." But though no man can take his riches with him when he dies, yet how many die longing to do so? This is not like the camel, humbly laying its burden down outside the gate! Remember, dear little friends, that except you are able and willing to leave father, mother, sister, brother, riches, home, everything in fact, you cannot be a disciple of

Jesus. If you have riches, or are likely to have them, set not your affections on them, but strive to use them in doing good to those around you, for Jesus' sake.

### THE HORSE.

THIS animal you all know so well, I am sure you could describe what he is like quite as well as I could; but you may require reminding of many things said of him in the Bible. I think the horse might be called "the king of useful animals," for in grace, beauty, courage, strength, and swiftness, he has no equal.

Have you ever read the splendid description of the war-horse in Job? Listen to it: and do not forget that it was God himself who was speaking. "Hast thou given the horse his strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? The glory of his nostrils is terrible; he paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men, he mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage; neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet: he saith among the trumpets, Ha! ha! and he smelleth the battle

afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting." (Job xxxix. 19 to 23.) Is not this a fine description? and must it not be a grand, but terrible sight, to behold the handsome war-horse rushing into battle, amid the sound of trumpets and roll of drums.

It is generally believed that the Egyptians first subdued and found out the value and usefulness of the horse. When Joseph was governor of Egypt, in the days of the famine, he gave the people corn in exchange for horses. This is the first mention of horses in the Bible, and was more than 1600 years before the birth of Christ. (Gen. xlvii. 17.) And when Jacob was buried, and taken to the land of Canaan, many chariots and horsemen went up with the Israelites on their journey. (Gen. l. 9.) When Pharaoh pursued after the Israelites, and overtook them on the shores of the Red Sea, he had six hundred chosen chariots; these were driven into the path in the sea, and both men and horses perished in the waters. In his song of praise, for this great deliverance, Moses says: "I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: *the horse* and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." (Exod. xv. 1.) "For the *horse* of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them," etc. (Verse 19.)



You have perhaps heard of the Arabian horse ; it is the swiftest and most graceful of its kind, and is beloved by the wild Arab as his own life. It eats out of his hand ; it lives and sleeps with his family ; and no money will tempt the wild sons of the desert to part with these beautiful and graceful creatures. There are many other kinds of horses, but of these you may read in other books ; it is the horses of the Bible I want to tell you about. \*

The strength of the horse is sometimes spoken of, but its strength could not save or deliver man from death. (Psa. xxxviii. 17 ; cxlvii. 10.) Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Habakkuk, all mention its swiftness. (Isa. xxx. 16 ; Jer. iv. 13 ; Hab. i. 8.) And its surefootedness Isaiah compares with God's leading His people by Moses : "That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble." (Isa. lxxiii. 13.) Its hard hoofs, prancings, snortings, etc., are also mentioned in various parts of the Scriptures. Black, white, red, bay, speckled, pale, and grizzled horses are also spoken of. Zechariah saw visions of different coloured horses : and in the Revelation of St. John you may read a great deal of the remarkable horses and riders he saw, and which were to show various events that were to happen in the ages to come.

Horses were used for many things in Bible

times, as they are now : for hunting (Job xxxix. 18),—for mounted soldiers or cavalry. The Philistines, on one occasion, fighting against Israel, had 6,000 horsemen. (1 Sam. xiii. 5.) They bore burdens, drew chariots, and carried despatches. Numbers of them were trained for war; and God often blames people for trusting in their fleetness, strength, and might in the battle. Kings and great men also often rode on them. Ezekiel says,—“The Babylonians, and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them; all of them desirable young men, captains and rulers, great lords, and renowned, all of them riding upon horses.” (Ezek. xxiii. 23.) In the latter days, when God shall restore Jerusalem, we are told that “in that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, *Holiness unto the Lord.*” (Zéch. xiv. 20.) Many horses now have tinkling bells fastened round their necks, making a pleasant sound as they move along. How much more beautiful will it be in those days when even the bells, as it were, shall be sanctified to the praise of Jesus. Horses were guided in Bible times as they are now, by a bit and bridle, which is spoken of in the Psalms and also by St. James.

God forbade the Israelites to multiply horses. (Deut. xvii. 16.) And Isaiah condemns them (chap. ii. 7) for disobeying God, who gave

them this command most likely because horses were the pride of heathen nations, and thus their hearts might be drawn into greater idolatry. Besides which, horses were devoted, or given, to their idols: and disobedience to God's command led the Israelites into this sin; for we read in 2 Kings xxiii. 11, of one of the kings of Judah, who had given some horses to the sun, and even placed them close to the door of God's house. Depend upon it, dear children, to disobey God is sure to lead us into trouble, and bring down His anger upon us. God did not *forbid* the Israelites to use horses: but He forbade their having *many* of them; and see the consequences. I am sorry to tell you that Solomon disregarded God, and brought from Egypt enormous numbers. He had 40,000 stalls for horses, and 12,000 horsemen. (1 Kings iv. 26.) The wicked who would not repent, are compared to a horse rushing into battle. (Jer. viii. 6.)

But again, God compares His church, or people, with "a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." (Song of Sol i. 9.) God also speaks of Israel, and says, He "hath made them as His goodly horse in the battle." (Zechariah x. 3.)

How many lessons we may learn from the dumb animals mentioned in the Bible!

## THE MULE.

THIS animal is not so frequently seen as the horse or the ass, both of which it resembles: sometimes being more like the one,—sometimes more like the other. It is often stupid and obstinate. (See Psalm xxxii. 9.) It is, however, a useful creature: and though not so handsome as the horse, is considered the most sure-footed of all animals, and the best able to bear fatigue. The mule is used for riding and driving in Eastern lands: also in many parts of Europe.

In the times when the Bible was written, it was much used for carrying burdens. (2 Kings v. 17; 1 Chron. xii. 40.)

Mules were always valued by the Israelites, though they were forbidden to have large numbers of them. They were among the presents brought by the people to king Solomon. They were also sold in the fairs of Tyre. (Ez. xxvii. 14.) David's sons all rode on mules. (2 Sam. xiii. 29.) Of Absalom,—that wicked man, who rebelled against his father, and fled from the battle,—we read, "And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away." (2 Sam. xviii. 9.) And you

perhaps know how he was left hanging by the beautiful hair of which he was so proud : and soon after a dart was thrust through his heart by his own cousin. Such was the end of this disobedient son ; and God is sure to punish, either here or hereafter, all children who do not honour their parents. I hope none of you, dear little friends, will ever make your parents' hearts sad, as David's was made sad by Absalom.

When Solomon was crowned king of Israel, he rode upon a mule to his coronation ;—so you see a mule was thought a great deal of in those days. And when God shall restore Jerusalem, mules are to be used, as well as other animals, to bring offerings to the holy city. (Is. lvi. 20.)

#### APES.

THESE animals are a kind of monkey, but are different from them in some respects, as they have no tails, and are larger in size. They are painfully like human beings. I never see an animal of this kind without feeling humbled, to think how nearly its face approaches to the face of a man. These beasts, however, are destitute of the sense which God has given to mankind, and live in trees, feeding upon leaves, fruits, insects, etc. They are chiefly brought from Africa and India. They are only once named in the Bible, I believe, and that is in 1 Kings

x. 22, where we read that king Solomon had "at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram : once in three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold, silver, ivory, and *apes*, and peacocks."

Why Solomon should send for these creatures I know not, for they are neither useful nor ornamental : perhaps he wished to see and study the habits of every known animal.



## Unclean Animals.

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### PART IV.

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#### THE LEOPARD.

How thankful we should be that in England we have no fierce beasts to frighten us, as is the case in nearly every other country. The leopard, though a graceful animal to look at, with a beautifully spotted skin, is yet a ravenous, bloody, and destructive animal. The panther is another kind of leopard, but larger and darker skinned : and these fierce creatures still abound in Palestine, where they attack sheepfolds, and cause terror and dismay to the shepherds. They are very difficult to guard against, for leopards can climb trees, swim well, crawl like a serpent, and leap tremendously. It has been said of this animal that, though always voracious for food, it is always thin. This seems an emblem of persons who indulge in every kind of vanity and pleasure freely, hoping to gain happiness, but who remain unsatisfied, and have, as the Bible says, "leanness in their souls."

Leopards, in Solomon's time, lived in the mountains ; and he speaks of them there, in his Song iv. 8. • Jeremiah says,—“ Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots ? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil ” (Jer. xiii. 23.) Thus you see how hardened the Jews had become in their sins. One of God's threatened judgments on the rebellious Jews was,—“ A leopard shall watch over their cities,” etc. (Jer. v. 6.) The prophet Habakuk speaks of the swiftness of the leopard. (Hab. i. 8.) God in anger says, by another prophet, that “ He will observe them (that is watch sinners) as a leopard by the way.” (Hosea xiii. 7.) Daniel saw a vision of beasts, among which was one like a leopard, which was to represent or show, the Macedonian kingdom. (Dan. vii. 6.) Isaiah speaks of that blessed time, of which I believe I told you before, when the “ leopard shall lie down with the kid.” (Is. xi. 6.) And lastly, St. John, like Daniel, saw a vision of a beast like a leopard, which rose out of the sea, “ having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns : and upon his heads the name of *blasphemy*.” (Rev. xiii. 1, 2.)

This beast signifies a false religion. Some people think it means the corrupt Church of Rome. Very likely it does ; but the book of Revelation is so mysterious, that no one can tell



with certainty the meaning of various things in it. It is, however, enough for you, dear children, to remember that everything for your salvation has been made so plain that you can understand it perfectly, and be thus made wise enough to obtain everlasting life.

### THE BEAR.

THERE are many kinds of this awkward, but dangerous animal, of which I cannot now tell you. Of course when the bear is mentioned in the Bible, it is the bear of Syria which is meant. Bears can feed either on flesh or vegetables, so that they are unlike such creatures as the lion or leopard, who live entirely on flesh. Bears do not generally attack man, unless very angry or hungry ; but they are terrible things to fight with. They have large dreadful teeth, and heavy paws, which they will clasp round their enemy, and squeeze him to death. They live generally in thick forests or caves, and in winter in hollow trees, in which they lie for many weeks without food. A few bears are still found on the high hills of Syria, and if pursued up a mountain, they will turn and throw heavy stones on their enemies ; and are so fierce that no man alone dare attack them. How brave, then, and strong must that young shepherd have been, who, when a bear had

seized a lamb of his flock, went after him, and, without help, caught and slew him. Need I tell you this was David. (1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35.) Daniel saw a vision of a bear, which was told to "arise, devour much flesh!" (Dan. vii. 5.)

This beast represented the kingdom of the Medes and Persians: which was to conquer and kill so many other nations. God in His judgments, is compared to a bear "lying in wait." (Sam. iii. 10.) The bear is very fierce when robbed of its whelps, or young ones. This is two or three times spoken of in the Bible. When Absalom was fighting against his father David, Hushai, one of the king's friends, compared David and his mighty men, in their fierceness and strength, with "a bear robbed of her whelps in a field." (2 Sam. xvii. 8.) And Solomon says: "Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly." (Prov. xvii. 12.) By which he meant, that fierce as a bear would be, it was better to be torn in pieces in her fury, rather than follow a bad man into sin. When Jesus Christ comes to reign, "the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together," we are told. (Is. xi. 7.) In Proverbs, a "ranging bear" is compared to "a wicked ruler over the poor people" (Prov. xxviii. 15.) God says in His judgments on sinners,—“I will meet them as a

bear that is bereaved of her whelps," etc. (Hosea xiii. 8.)

Thus you see how often this animal's fierceness is spoken of. All of you, I doubt not, have heard that sad story (2 Kings ii. 23—25) of the wicked children who mocked the prophet Elisha, saying,—“Go up, thou bald-head; go up, thou bald-head.” Do you know what these children meant? I did not when I was a little child.



A short time before this happened, God had taken Elijah from Elisha, and carried him up to

heaven in a chariot of fire? Elisha now was going up a steep hill, to a place called Bethel: and these little children seeing him toiling up the steep road, most likely with his bald head uncovered, mockingly laughed at him, and told him to "go up;" meaning, go up to heaven as your master Elijah did. This was very wicked. Elisha was God's servant: and God punished them for their sin. Elisha cursed them, or said they should be punished; and there came out of the wood two she bears, and tore forty-two children in pieces. Oh! how must those wicked little children have felt when seized by the monsters, and torn limb from limb! Did they call on God to have mercy and forgive? We do not know; but we *do* know that this dreadful story was written for our warning, that we might not follow in the same dreadful path. I hope you are always respectful to old people,—never laughing at their misfortunes, or making fun of those who have something strange in their appearance. Whenever you feel the least inclined to do this, think of the children and the bears.

#### THE BADGER.

THE badger is generally considered a stupid, but inoffensive animal. Its habits are solitary, or lonely: it prefers night to day for coming out to seek its food. It has a thick flattish

body, a short tail, long pointed head, and small eyes. It has a thick greyskin, which is waterproof. It lives in many parts of Europe and Asia. It is seldom mentioned in the Bible; I believe only twice. In the directions for making the Tabernacle, badgers' skins were to be used; probably because of their strength, and security from rain. (See Ex. xxv. 5.)

### THE FERRET.

THE word given in our translation of the Bible as ferret, does not mean the animal we know by that name. It is a kind of lizard, which has a cold, clammy body; and if it crawls over anything, leaves it injured and unfit for use. Well might it be unclean and loathsome to the Israelites, and serve to remind them of the very touch or thought of sin leaving a mark on the soul, which would make it unfit to approach a holy God. (Lev. xi. 30.)

### THE WEASEL OR MOLE.

THE word translated weasel in the Bible means a mole. Perhaps some of you have seen what are called mole-hills,—little mounds of earth thrown up in fields. These little animals, though only five or six inches long, are among the most curious creatures in the world. I could tell you much about them; but the days of the

week would be the proper time to read about all these things : and I can here only say a few words.

It has a black shining skin, as soft as velvet. It has no outward ear ; but it can hear with wonderful quickness. It burrows under ground, and lives and breathes there, as well as we can above it. It builds itself a most wonderful dwelling under the earth, and has rooms and galleries, and quite a little castle in its fortifications. But, curious as it is, there are some things about it which we cannot admire. It is very ravenous, and if hungry will eat up its weaker companion, except its skin. Some people think it injures the land ;—but others believe that animals who eat grass thrive better where there are moles. This animal is twice referred to in the Bible : 1st, in Lev. xi. 30 ; and again, Isaiah, speaking of the latter days, says,—“ In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the *moles* and to the *bats*.” (Is. ii. 20.)

#### THE MOUSE.

THE little animal called in the Bible a mouse, refers to one rather larger than the mouse you have so often seen. Its proper name is *JERBOA*, and it is about the size of a rat. It lives and burrows in the ground, and is very tiresome in eating the corn in

the fields. Do you remember when the Philistines had stolen the ark of God from the Israelites, how He sent these animals to spoil their land: and the foolish people made images of these mice to offer to God, thinking it might induce Him to send them away. It was considered a very unclean animal, and seems to have been particularly forbidden to the Jews; for Isaiah speaks of the eating of it by the idolatrous Jews as a great sin, which should be severely punished. (See Is. lxvi. 17.)

#### THE CONEY

Is a sort of rabbit, called now the WUBER. It is often seen in Palestine now; it is a very timid little creature, which lives among rocks, and may sometimes be seen basking in the sun upon them, for it is very fond of heat. It is mentioned two or three times in the Bible: Lev. xi. 5. David says of it, in Ps. civ. 18, "The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies." (See also Prov. xxx. 26.)

#### THE HARE.

THIS animal is much the same as the hare of our own country; of the flesh of which we, who are not under the Jewish law, are allowed to eat. I do not think the hare is mentioned more than twice or three times in

the Bible, neither is anything said of it, except that to the Jews it was to be unclean.

## THE WOLF.

THE wolf is an animal of the dog kind, though far more savage, fierce, and ravenous. I know no animal of which so little can be said in its favour. It is not useful, nor pretty, nor gentle. It is sly, bloodthirsty, and unclean. There is hardly any country which is without this odious beast. It lives both in cold and hot countries, though it differs somewhat in colour and size, according to the regions in which it dwells. How thankful we should be that in dear old England we need not fear to meet a glaring-eyed hungry wolf. A king, called Edgar, succeeded in killing nearly all the wolves in England, many hundred years ago; and now for a long time not a single wolf has been found. If England had not been an island, we should never have been free; but they cannot swim across the sea. Wolves go in troops; and often they have for miles followed travellers, pouncing on their horses, or even themselves,—tearing their victims savagely, and drinking their blood.

The wolf is often spoken of in the Bible. The tribe of Benjamin (Gen. xlix. 27) is compared to it:—"Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf:



in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." This meant, that the tribe of Benjamin should be fierce and successful warriors or conquerors, and should obtain more land and spoil than some of the other tribes. Wolves seek their prey by night. This is sometimes referred to in the Bible. Habakuk says of the Chaldean nation and their horses, that they "are more fierce than the evening wolves." (Hab. i. 8. See also Jer. v. 6.) The Lord Jesus Christ speaks of their destructiveness among sheep; and that the hireling, or hired shepherd, runs away when he sees the wolf coming: "And the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep." (John x. 12.) When Jesus sent out His disciples to preach the Gospel, He said,—“Go your ways: Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.” (Luke x. 3; Matt. x. 16.) This meant that wicked people would try to kill them, as the wolves do, the gentle lambs. Wicked rulers are compared to wolves. Ezekiel says (xxii. 27), “Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.”

Another prophet says,—“Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they know not the bones till the morrow.” (Zep. iii. 3.) Jesus compares false prophets

to wolves in sheeps' clothing." (Matt. vii. 15.) St. Paul also calls false teachers "grievous wolves" (Acts xx. 29), and good people the sheep,—for wolves are the greatest enemies of sheep. This is no doubt the reason why Isaiah twice tells us that, in that blessed time of peace yet to come, "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb." (Isa. xi. 6 ; lxv. 25.) How changed the fierce, greedy nature of the wolf will then be ; and in that time of holiness and peace, all false teachers and doctrines, of which the wolf is a type, shall be removed far away from the followers of Jesus.

### THE UNICORN.

WHAT this animal really is, or whether there is such a creature *now* in existence, I do not know ; learned men have different opinions about it. Some think the buffalo is meant ; but there are many reasons why this cannot be,—some of which I will tell you. The unicorn is spoken of as having only one horn. The buffalo has two. But whatever animal is meant by the unicorn, it certainly is not the one you have seen painted in what are called the "Queen's Arms,"—the lion and the unicorn. It is far more likely to mean a kind of rhinoceros. There are many fables, or untrue stories, told of this animal, invented to amuse or terrify people ; but they

are sometimes so foolish and ridiculous, that even silly, superstitious people cannot believe them. Job speaks of this creature, and says,—“Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or to abide by thy crib? Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him? Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it unto thy barn?” (Job xxxix. 9—12.)

From this we find that the unicorn was a fierce, untamed animal, of great strength. Now the buffalo, though sometimes fierce, is often tamed and made a most valuable servant to man, and is used in ploughing and harrowing the land of Palestine; so that this seems another reason why the unicorn cannot be the buffalo. Whatever the old unicorns' nature might be, the young ones are described as active. David says,—“The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty; the voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon; He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a *young unicorn*.” (Ps. xxix. 4—6.) When Balaam, the wicked prophet, was forced by God to bless Israel, instead of cursing them, twice he compares God's strength to that of the

unicorn :—" God brought him (Israel) forth out of Egypt ; He hath as it were the strength of an unicorn : He shall eat up the nations His enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with His arrows." (Num. xxiv. 8 ; xxiii. 22 ; Is. xxxiv. 7.)

Powerful and wicked enemies are compared to the horns of unicorns by David, in that Psalm which foretells the sufferings and death of Jesus. (Ps. xxii. 21.) And in another Psalm, the exaltation, or lifting up, of the saints is said to be like the horns of unicorns. (Ps. xcii. 10.)

In the blessing of Moses on the tribe of Ephraim and Manasseh, he says,—“ His glory is like the firstling of the bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns : with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth ; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.” (Deut. xxxiii. 17.)

Whatever this animal really was, you see it was well known to ancient writers, or it would not have been so often mentioned in the Bible.

#### THE BEHEMOTH.

THIS animal is only once alluded to in the Bible ; but in the description of it given by Job, it was probably some sort of buffalo : perhaps a larger

kind than that still found along the marshy banks of the river Jordan. Some people think the elephant is meant by the behemoth, and in many respects Job's description is like that animal. When you are older, you can read what learned men have said on both sides, and judge for yourself. The buffalo may be seen constantly in Palestine. It is black, without hair, and delights in wallowing in miry places. It is much larger than the ordinary cattle of the country. Sometimes it is used in the plough; and its milk is much valued by the Arabs for making butter. It is at times very fierce, and will trample upon people and kill them in its fury. As Job lived in the region of the buffalo, I think it very likely he meant, by the behemoth, an animal of the buffalo tribe, and had—as is the custom in the language of the East—somewhat magnified its great strength. Before you go on to the next animal, read what he says about the behemoth. (See Job xl 15—24.)

#### THE SWINE OR PIG.

THIS animal was held in extreme abomination by the Jews; partly because heathen nations used it in their idolatrous sacrifices, and partly on account of its filthy habits,—for who does not know how dirty and fond of mud and mire this unpleasant looking animal is. But though the

grossest or most filthy of animals, it is of value to man. The Jews and Mahometans do not eat it, but we in England are very fond of bacon and ham; and what our poor sailors would do in their long voyages without salt pork I know not. In *hot* countries, however, the flesh of the swine is very unwholesome. It generally produces disease, sometimes that most loathsome of all afflictions—the leprosy. So that the strict injunctions given about not eating it, to the Jews and other southern nations, was a merciful command from God. To this day, many Jews and all Mahometans consider themselves defiled by even touching any part of it.

There were two kinds of this animal known in Palestine: the wild boar, which lived in woods and was fierce and dangerous (Psa. lxxx. 13), and the same kind as are kept in this country. It was probably the former which Jesus meant when he said,—“Neither cast ye your pearls (good things or words) before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend (or tear) you.” (Matt. vii. 6.) And St. Peter alluded to the latter, or tamer kind, when he spoke of the sow, or female swine, that was washed, returning to her wallowing in the mire. (2 Pet. ii. 22.) This is like the wicked returning again and again to sin, after they have professed to repent and seek God; better, far

better, would it have been for such persons not to have known what was right, than having known it, to forsake it and return into sin. Swine, kept in the time when the Evangelists wrote their Gospels, were generally in herds, and had a man to attend them. This situation was considered the *lowest* a person could have. Do you remember how the prodigal son, when he had spent all that he had, went and hired himself to a citizen, who sent him into the fields to feed swine; in his hunger, he even desired to eat the husks, or beans, that the swine were fed upon, but no man gave to him. This misery brought him to himself, he became sorry for his sin, and then he returned to his loving father and asked his forgiveness. We, dear children, when we are in trouble are often humbled and in sorrow for our sins, and are thus led back to the feet of our loving Saviour Jesus Christ. The Jews were often condemned for disobeying God's command, and eating swine's flesh. Isaiah says of the wicked Israelites: "A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick; which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments; which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels," etc. (Isa. lxxv. 3.) And again,—“He that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's

blood." (Isa. lxvi. 3.) And in the seventeenth verse of the same chapter, he again refers to eating the flesh of this animal as an abomination and insult to God. When Jerusalem was taken, some time after the days of Isaiah, by that dreadfully wicked man Antiochus Epiphanes, who plundered the Temple, and took away the daily sacrifice, in order to show his hatred and contempt for Judah's law and Judah's God; he sacrificed a swine upon the very altar of the Temple itself, and with the broth of its flesh he sprinkled the holy place. Could anything have been more abominable or revolting to the poor Jews, who were murdered and tortured in thousands by this savage tyrant. All this came upon them as a punishment for their sins. Afterwards a mighty deliverer arose, in Judas Macca-bæus: a hero indeed, who rescued his people and purified the temple.

On the shores of the Sea of Galilee there is a little place called Gergesa, or Gersa, or Thersa, the inhabitants of which in the time of our Saviour were most likely termed Gergesenes. Above this village rises a mountain, upon which the remains of tombs are still visible. Walking along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus one day was met by two poor deranged men coming from these tombs. None but insane, or wicked people would frequent these places, be-



cause to come in contact with the dead made a man unclean according to the law, but these poor creatures knew it not. Fierce and frightful, both in appearance and habits, no one dared go near them. Jesus was not afraid. The evil spirits in these poor men knew their Conqueror was there, and on Him they had no power; therefore they cried out with fear, and wished Jesus to leave them alone. But this He would not do, for He desired to save these unhappy men. The devils then asked Him to allow them to enter into an herd of swine, which was feeding a good way off, and "He said unto them, go." And what happened? Immediately the swine became mad, and not knowing what was upon them or what they did, rushed violently down a steep place "into the sea, and perished in the waters." Now, why do you think, dear children, God permitted these swine to be destroyed? Were they not unclean animals? and had not the Jews been expressly warned *not* to keep them? Even if they belonged to Gentiles, many of whom lived on the shores of this sea, *they* knew that to keep these animals was an abomination to the Jews; and in either case, keeping them was in disobedience to the commands of God; therefore it was that Jesus to punish their sin, suffered the devils to destroy the whole herd. And what happened afterwards? "They that

kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told everything, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw Him, they besought Him that He would depart out of their coasts." (Matt. viii. 33, 34.) Oh! what a sad request, to ask the Son of God to leave them! How different was the behaviour of one of the poor men out of whom the devil was cast. When the Gergesenes came to Jesus, they found him who had been a terror to them all, "clothed and in his right mind," sitting by his Saviour, ready to follow Him wherever He went.

Did Jesus answer the request of the Gergesenes? did He tell them how dreadful it was to request the Son of God to leave them? We do not read that He did. They had seen the miracle He had wrought,—the maniac restored, the devils overpowered,—and if these signs did not touch their hearts, nothing would. *Their day of grace was past.* The Saviour left them to die unbelieving, and without sorrow for their sins. *And, remember this, dear children, we never hear of Him returning among them.* He entered into a little ship to leave; but there was one who followed Him, with earnest entreaties that he might go with Him. It was that hitherto fierce madman. But Jesus would not allow him.

Why? Because he was to go and tell his friends and relations what great things Jesus had done for him. And the man immediately obeyed, and went and published the news of the goodness of Jesus throughout all the region. (Mark v.) I do not know what became of the other man who was healed. I fear he, like the Gergesenes, went away and left the Son of God; for St. Mark does not even mention him, and St. Matthew simply says there were *two* instead of one: but he does not seem to have loved and believed Jesus as did his companion.

Now, dear little friends, I have a question to put to you. Jesus has often spoken to your heart, you have heard of His wonders, you know He is the Son of God; yet are you wishing Him to leave you, and let you still go on sinning? I trust not. I hope you will ask Him to abide with you here, and like the restored madman, spend your time in telling others of His mercy and goodness to you. Then, though now perhaps you cannot be in His presence, as you have work on earth to do, He will hereafter take you to His glorious kingdom, to abide with Him for ever.

#### THE FOX.

IN the Bible the word called "~~fox~~" sometimes means a jackal, which is an animal very like a fox, only fiercer and of more disagreeable habits,

and is far more numerous in Palestine. The fox is considered the most cunning of all animals. When Jesus Christ sent a message to Herod, he called him "that fox" (Luke xiii. 32),—meaning that he was a deceitful man. The fox can never be made to show either gratitude or affection, which is a sad feature in its disposition.

Foxes are found in almost all countries, though varying in colour. In England they are getting scarce, as they are so much hunted. They live in dens or holes in the earth, generally near some wood, and seek their prey by night. Jesus says,—“The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.” (Matt. viii. 20; Luke ix. 58.) Exekiel compares false prophets to foxes in the deserts. (Exek. xiii. 4.) You may perhaps remember how Samson punished the Philistines, by tying firebrands to the tails of three-hundred foxes or jackals, and sending them among the standing corn, by which means their harvest was spoilt. (Judg. xv. 4—6.) •

Jackals are different to foxes, as they go in troops together to seek their prey. The noise they make is dismal, wild, and hideous; sometimes they yelp or bark, sometimes they scream or wail horribly,—rising higher at one time, sinking lower at another. They frequent the neighbourhood of graves, and often scratch up

the newly-buried dead, if not properly secured, and devour the bodies. Perhaps this is what David meant, when he said of the enemies of God,—“They shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes.” (Psa. lxxiii. 10.) David, at the time he wrote this, was a wanderer in the wilderness of Judah, and must have been reminded of this expression by the horrid yells and screams the jackals made at night.

In the Song of Solomon ii. 15, there is this verse: “Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes.” Foxes were very fond of the tender vines and grapes, and were very destructive amongst them; and being small animals, could the better hide in vineyards.

Little sins are like little foxes,—they injure people’s souls even more than great offences, because they think of them less; and by this means they grow worse and worse, and sin more and more. Beware of little sins,—at least, what are called “little ones” by the world, for in God’s eye all sins are great. Watch your hearts for the first appearance of thought of evil, and pray that God will keep you from little sins.

#### THE DOG.

We come now to a very well-known animal, and a great favourite. But though such noble

and faithful creatures in our country, the dogs of the East are disliked almost more than any animals. In Egypt they are a perfect pest ; for they are loathsome, ill-tempered, and vicious. They howl and prowl about at night also, to the great discomfort of the people who live near them. David refers to this habit, and compares it to the conduct of the wicked : " They return at evening ; they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city." (Psa. lix. 6, 14, 15.)

Eastern dogs are useful as scavengers, for they clear away all the refuse of the cities. They are never caressed, or even taken into the houses. In Palæstine the shepherds have their dogs, but they are not half the use to them that the shepherds' dogs are in England, and they are unpleasant looking creatures. These animals are also much fiercer than our dogs, and are fond of blood.

Dogs are so often spoken of in the Bible, that I cannot tell you half the places ; you must try and look them out for yourselves. The Jews despised dogs very much ; and when men were ill-treated, they were accustomed to speak of themselves as used as if they were dogs. Abner, the captain of Israel's host, asked the king of Israel if he was a dog's head, that he should be scorned. (2 Sam. iii. 8.) A question like this was asked of Elisha the prophet, by wicked

Hazael. (2 Kings viii. 12.) The Jews called the Gentiles dogs, because they were at that time beneath them. When the poor Gentile woman came to Jesus, imploring Him to heal her daughter, He said,—“It is not meet to take the children’s bread and cast it to dogs.” (Matt. xv. 26.) The children meant the Jews. This woman’s reply was beautiful: “Truth, Lord,” she said, “yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master’s table:” meaning,—it is true I am no better than a dog, yet even dogs are allowed to have the food which their masters do not care for. This beautiful reply pleased Jesus, and He spoke of her great faith, and healed her daughter.

Nothing holy or dedicated to God was to be given to dogs. (Matt. vii. 6.) Neither would God accept the price of a dog, or money paid for one, from the Jews; He calls it an abomination. (Deut. xxiii. 18.) Things torn by beasts *might* be given to dogs to eat. (See Exod. xxii. 31.) I need hardly tell you that to sacrifice a dog was forbidden. (Isa. lxvi. 3.) That it was a very unclean animal, we may learn from dogs coming and licking the sores of the beggar Lazarus, which was a loathsome and unclean thing to do; and still more disgusting, is the habit of eating again its own vomit: which St. Peter mentions, as showing the impurity of

sinner. (2 Peter ii. 22.)\* Its impatience and cruelty are also alluded to, in Proverbs xxvi. 17, and Psalms xxii. 18.

To be eaten by dogs when dead, was a curse sent by God upon the seed of kings more than once. Of Jeroboam, who taught his people to commit idolatry, it was said,—“*Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city, shall the dogs eat.*” (1 Kings xiv. 11.) Of Ahab, who murdered Naboth because he wanted his vineyard, Elijah was told to say,—“*In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.*” (1 Kings xxi. 19.) And we read of Ahab’s wife Jezebel. (2 Kings ix. 35), when she had been thrown out of the window, and trampled under the wheels of Jehu’s chariot, that when they went to bury her,—“*They found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of the hands,*”—for the *dogs* had eaten her flesh. When Ahab’s chariot was washed in the Pool of Samaria, after the battle of Ramoth-Gilead, the dogs came and licked his blood, according to God’s word. (1 Kings xxii. 38.)

Dogs are often compared to the *wicked* in the Bible, but never to the righteous; they were considered lower than most other animals. Solomon compares a fool in his folly to a dog. (Prov. xxvii. 11.) The ministers of Israel, in times of idolatry are said to be like “dumb



dogs, they cannot bark : sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber : yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough." (Isa. lvi. 10, 11.) St. Paul says, "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers," etc. (Phil. iii. 2),—which means, beware of false teachers who would lead you wrong. And in the glorious city of heaven, where there shall enter nothing that defileth, or is unclean, or unholy, we read, in the last chapter of the Bible, "without" (that is, outside the gates of heaven), "*without are dogs* (or evil workers), and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whatsoever loveth *and maketh a LIE.*" (Rev. xxii. 15.)

Dear children, I hope I have not tired you ; but I have now told you, I believe, something of all the animals mentioned in the Bible. I have spoken of the dog last, because it is the last-named animal in the Bible ; and I now want to press upon you the solemn question, as to whether you think *you* are fit to enter *within* the golden gates of heaven, or to be left *without*, among the unclean dogs, who can never enter therein ? I am sure you all earnestly desire to go to heaven when you die ; but are you striving earnestly to walk in the narrow road which leads there ? I hope you are, and that each and all of you will enter within the gates, leaving without all that is unholy and impure.

## QUESTIONS ON ANIMALS.

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Q. Into how many kinds were animals divided under the Jewish law ?

A. Two. The clean and unclean.

Q. Were animals fierce in the garden of Eden ?

A. No. But when sin entered, their natures as well as those of men, were changed.

Q. Who gave the beasts their names ?

A. Adam.

Q. Who first brought an offering of his flock ?

A. Abel.

Q. Of what were sacrifices a type ?

A. Of Jesus Christ's offering up Himself.

Q. What animals were used in sacrifice ?

A. Bulls, sheep, and goats.

Q. What tribes of Israel had the greatest number of flocks and herds ?

A. Reuben and Gad.

Q. What prophet was a herdsman ?

A. Amos.

Q. What king and prophet was a shepherd ?

A. David.

Q. What man, afterwards a king, was met by Samuel looking for his father's asses ?

A. Saul, the son of Kish.

Q. What is an ox-goad ?

A. A long pointed pole, used for urging on oxen.

Q. Who slew 600 men with an ox-goad ?

A. Shamgar, a judge of Israel.

Q. Who was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen, when called to be a prophet ?

A. Elisha.

Q. Who says, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib" ?

A. Isaiah.

Q. What nation worshipped bulls ?

A. The Egyptians.

Q. What nation made a golden calf in Horeb ?

A. The Israelites.

Q. Who made a molten sea, which stood upon twelve oxen ?

A. Solomon.

Q. Who made golden calves in Dan and Beersheba, and taught the Israelites to worship them ?

A. King Jeroboam.

Q. Who is called "the Lamb of God" ?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. What sort of tails have the sheep of Palestine ?

A. Long, heavy tails ; the fat of which is much esteemed.

Q. Who is called the Good Shepherd ?

A. Jesus.

Q. Is the Eastern shepherd's life a dangerous one ?

A. Yes. Sometimes he loses his life to save his sheep.

Q. Do the sheep go before, or follow after the shepherd, in the East ?

A. They follow after.

Q. What beautiful verses in the Bible does this explain ?

A. John x. 4, 5.

Q. What animals are great enemies to the sheep ?

A. Wolves, bears, lions, leopards, hyenas, etc.

Q. What great lawgiver kept for forty years his father-in-law's sheep in the wilderness ?

A. Moses.

Q. Who were keeping their flocks by night when the birth of Jesus was told them ?

A. The shepherds of Bethlehem.

Q. How many sheep did Solomon sacrifice at the dedication of the temple ?

A. One hundred and twenty thousand.

Q. How many oxen ?

A. Twenty-two thousand.

Q. Who are compared to sheep and goats ?

A. The righteous and the wicked.

Q. What is the goat covered with?

A. Hair instead of wool.

Q. For what is it celebrated?

A. Its sure-footedness and courage.

Q. Is its milk useful?

A. Yes.

Q. What are the young of goats called?

A. Kids.

Q. Who made savoury meat from kid's flesh?

A. Rebekah.

Q. Of what kingdom was the goat an emblem?

A. The Macedonian Empire.

Q. What sacrifice of goats was the most typical under the Jewish law?

A. That on the day of Atonement, when two goats were taken, and one killed. The other, called the scape-goat, was sent far off into the wilderness, after having had the sins of the people confessed over it.

Q. Of what was the scape-goat a type?

A. Of Him who bore our sins and carried our sorrows on Himself, by shedding His blood for all who believe on Him.

Q. What are harts and hinds?

A. Deer; so called at the age of six years.

Q. Are there many in Palestine?

A. Yes. Where they may often be seen

feeding among the lilies, and skipping on the hills.

Q. To whom are they thus compared ?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. Who was compared to a hind let loose ?

A. Napthali.

Q. Who was said to be light of foot, as a young roe ?

A. David's nephew, Asahel.

Q. Is the hind very tender to its young ?

A. Yes ; it will never forsake them except when famishing with hunger.

Q. Who describes himself as panting for his God, like a hart after the waterbrooks ?

A. David.

Q. In what does the roebuck differ in habit from the hart ?

A. Not going in herds, but in single families.

Q. What is the Pygarg ?

A. A kind of antelope, with splendid horns.

Q. What is the wild ox of the Bible ?

A. A kind of stag,—properly called the oryx.

Q. What do some people suppose the chamois of the Bible to mean ?

A. The giraffe.

Q. What is the chamois ?

A. A small, wild, graceful antelope.

Q. Where is the fallow-deer often seen ?

A. In English parks.

Q. Is the ass of the East like our asses in England ?

A. No ; it is a much finer animal.

Q. How many kinds of asses are there ?

A. Two :—the wild and the tame one.

Q. Who made several allusions to the wild ass ?

A. Job.

Q. What king, when a madman, made his dwelling with the wild asses ?

A. Nebuchadnezzar.

Q. What nations hunt and eat the wild ass ?

A. The Tartars and Persians.

Q. Who rode upon white asses ?

A. Great men of olden times.

Q. Who had 500 she-asses, 7,000 sheep, and 3,000 camels ?

A. Job.

Q. When was an ass's head sold for eighty pieces of silver ?

A. At the siege of Samaria.

Q. What tribe of Israel was compared to a strong ass, etc. ?

A. Issachar.

Q. Who killed 1,000 men with the jaw-bone of an ass ?

A. Samson.

Q. Who rode upon a young ass into Jerusalem ?

A. The Lord Jesus Christ.

Q. What animal is called "the king of beasts"?

A. The lion.

Q. What is said of the lion's roar?

A. It makes all other animals tremble.

Q. Who are bold as a lion?

A. The righteous.

Q. Who was cast into a den of lions?

A. Daniel.

Q. Who killed a lion and a bear?

A. David.

Q. Who tore a lion as if it were a little kid?

A. Samson.

Q. Who slew a lion in a pit, on a snowy day?

A. Benaiah.

Q. Who was slain by a lion?

A. The disobedient prophet.

Q. Who had twelve figures of lions about his throne?

A. Solomon.

Q. What tribes are called "a lion's whelp"?

A. The tribes of Judah and Dan.

Q. What two men were said to be stronger than lions?

A. Saul and Jonathan.

Q. Who is called the "roaring lion"?



A. Satan.

Q. Who is called the lion of the tribe of Judah?

A. The Lord Jesus Christ.

Q. What animal has been called the ship of the desert?

A. The camel.

Q. What is the difference between a camel and a dromedary?

A. The camel has two humps; the dromedary only one hump on its back.

Q. How long can the camel go without water?

A. Seven or eight days.

Q. Is it a patient animal?

A. Very much so; and most enduring.

Q. Who speaks of its swiftness?

A. Jeremiah.

Q. Who had a garment of camels' hair?

A. John the Baptist.

Q. Name some men mentioned in the Bible being rich in Camels.

A. Abraham, Jacob, Job, etc.

Q. Who hid her father's idols in the camel's saddle?

A. Rachel.

Q. What nation had camels almost without number?

A. The Midianites.

Q. Who took from the Hargarites 50,000 camels?

A. The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Q. Who sent forty camels, laden with good things, to the prophet Elijah?

A. Benhadad, king of Syria.

Q. Who fled from Gideon on camels?

A. Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.

Q. What queen had many camels in her train?

A. The queen of Sheba.

Q. What animal cannot be equalled in beauty, courage, strength, and swiftness?

A. The horse.

Q. Where is there a fine description of the war-horse?

A. In the book of Job.

Q. Who were forbidden to multiply horses?

A. The Israelites.

Q. Who are supposed to have found out the value and use of the horse?

A. The Egyptians.

Q. Whose chariots and horses were lost in the Red Sea?

A. Pharaoh's.

Q. Where are the finest horses?

A. In Arabia.

Q. Who had 40,000 stalls for horses?

A. Solomon.

Q. What animal is regarded as the most sure-footed, and the best able to bear fatigue?

A. The mule.

Q. In what fairs were mules sold, in Bible times?

A. The fairs of Tyre.

Q. Who rode on a mule under an oak, where his long hair caught, and he was left hanging in the tree?

A. Absalom.

Q. Who rode on a mule to his coronation?

A. Solomon.

Q. Who had apes brought from Tarshish, by a navy?

A. Solomon.

Q. What sort of animal is the leopard?

A. A graceful spotted creature; but fierce, sly, and bloodthirsty.

Q. Who asks if the leopard can change his spots?

A. Jeremiah.

Q. Name one of God's threatened judgments connected with the leopard.

A. "A leopard shall watch over their cities."  
(Jer. v. 6.)

Q. Who speaks of the swiftness of the leopard?

A. Habakkuk.

Q. What sort of animal is the bear ?

A. An awkward, but dangerous one.

Q. What makes the bear particularly fierce ?

A. Being bereaved of her whelps.—This is several times mentioned in the Bible.

Q. How many wicked children did two she-bears once tear in pieces ?

A. Forty-two.

Q. What had these children done ?

A. Mocked the prophet Elijah.

Q. How are badgers' skins mentioned in the Bible ?

A. In the making of the Tabernacle.

Q. What sort of creature does the ferret mentioned in the Bible mean ?

A. A noxious kind of lizard.

Q. Where does the mole dwell ?

A. Under the ground.

Q. What does Isaiah say of idols ?

A. A time shall come when they shall be cast to the moles and to the bats. (Is. ii. 20.)

Q. Was it considered unclean to eat the mouse ?

A. Very much so.

Q. What did these little creatures do to corn ?

A. They destroyed it.

Q. What is the coney ?

A. A kind of rabbit, living among rocks.

Q. Was the hare unclean to the Jews ?

A. Yes.

Q. What sort of creature is the wolf ?

A. Of the dog kind,—sly, savage, and cruel.

Q. What tribe of Israel was compared to a wolf ?

A. Benjamin.

Q. To what does Jesus compare false prophets ?

A. Wolves in sheeps' clothing.

Q. What do some people suppose the unicorn to mean ?

A. The rhinoceros. \*

Q. Who speaks of the behemoth ; and what animal is it thought to mean ?

A. Job. Some think the buffalo.

Q. What animal was held in great abhorrence by the Jews for its filthy habits ?

A. The swine.

Q. In hot countries, what disease does eating its flesh often produce ?

A. Leprosy.

Q. Who was sent into the fields to feed swine ?

A. The prodigal son.

Q. Who sacrificed a swine on God's altar ?

A. Antiochus Epiphanes. •

Q. Who permitted devils to enter a herd of swine ?

A. The Lord Jesus.

Q. What sort of animal is the fox, or jackal?

A. Very sly, and incapable of affection.

Q. Who caught 300 jackals, and, tying fire-brands to their tails, sent them among his enemies' corn?

A. Samson.

Q. What did the Lord Jesus call Herod?

A. "That fox."

Q. What sort of noise do jackals make?

A. A dreadful wailing and howling.

Q. Is the dog liked in the East?

A. No; he is despised.

Q. Who called the Gentiles dogs?

A. The Jews.

Q. What did the poor woman say to the Lord Jesus about this?

A. "The dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

Q. Was the Lord Jesus pleased?

A. Yes. He praised her faith, and healed her child.

Q. Whose blood was licked up by dogs?

A. Ahab's.

Q. Who was eaten by dogs?

A. The bad queen Jezebel.

Q. To whom are dogs compared?

A. The wicked, in many parts of the Bible.

Q. What are said to be without the gates of heaven ?

A. Dogs.

Q. What does this mean ?

A. Bad people.

Q. What is the last animal named in the Bible ?

A. The dog.

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END OF ANIMALS.

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## BIRDS OF THE BIBLE.

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I THINK there is almost as much said in the Bible about birds as of animals; and quite as many useful lessons to be learnt from their habits and instinct as from four-footed creatures. As among the beasts there was a clean and an unclean kind, so among the birds there was the same; and the law of not eating the blood was given by God for both. There are innocent and gentle birds, which feed on plain food; and there are what are called carnivorous birds, which devour flesh as voraciously as even the jackal or wolf. Birds, like beasts, were created for God's glory. (Psalm cxlviii. 10.) They also received names from Adam (Gen. ii. 19), and were placed under his subjection. (See Gen. i. 30; i. 26.) The Second Commandment forbids the worship of birds, but many heathen nations disobeyed this law, and brought down God's heavy judgments upon them in consequence.



Birds differ in their habits, in the places in which they dwell, and the positions in which they build their nests. Some are found in the very streets of towns, while others inhabit deserts, ruins, mountains, or marshes. Some make their nests in trees, some among rocks, or ruins, on the roofs of houses, or even on the ground. Some fly high and quickly, others only clumsily, and some not at all. Other kinds are migratory (Jer. viii. 7), that is,—they remove from one country to another at different seasons, or in times of distress and famine. One of the prophets says, speaking of the desolations of Judah, “I beheld, and lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled.” (Jer. iv. 25.) All these peculiarities of birds are mentioned at various times in the Bible, showing us how well the writers of the Holy Book knew their habits. ●

The singing of birds is, as you know, very sweet and joyous; and this is beautifully spoken of in the Scriptures. (See Psalm civ. 12; Ecclesiastes xii. 4.) In the Song of Solomon there is a description of spring-time, in which this is also mentioned: “Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of *the singing of birds* is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.” (Song of Solomon ii. 12.) Each of these

little feathered singers has a different note ; some sweet and clear, some loud and shrill. There are other birds who do not sing at all ; but croak, hoot, or scream, or make other unpleasant sounds : these are not so welcome to us as their gentler companions, which we often see cruelly confined in cages, far from their comfortable little nests and happy associates. Jeremiah alludes to birds in cages, even in his time. (See chap. v. 27.) But I must hasten to tell you a little of each Bird that we find mentioned in the Bible.

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## Clean Birds.

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### PART I.

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#### THE DOVE or PIGEON.

THERE are many different species of these sweet, gentle, and diving birds, and in Syria and Palestine they are very abundant. The two kinds best known are the ring-dove, and the turtle-dove. Pigeons, which are the same sort of birds, are found all over the world, but in the most enormous numbers in America. You must read in books of natural history the extraordinary accounts given of the millions and millions of these birds, which fly in flocks *miles* in length, and make the air appear black with their vast numbers. When they alight, to seek rest and food, upon the large forest trees, whole acres are broken down and crushed by their weight, while the ground itself is injured for years afterwards. The ring-dove is the largest of this kind of bird. It is wild and swift, generally roosts in trees, and cannot ever be tamed, or made to live in captivity. Its coo-

ing is more sorrowful than that of any other bird. The turtle-dove comes to England during the spring and summer. I daresay you have seen it and heard its soft, sweet, cooing voice. It is noted for its love for its mate, and if one dies its companion suffers so deeply it often pines away and dies also. What a sweet lesson of love we may learn from this bird. David speaks of a dove whose wings are covered with silver, and her feathers of yellow gold. (Psa. lxxviii. 12.) There is a dove of this kind, found near Damascus, with such bright yellow feathers as make it shine almost like gold, and it is to this he is thought to have alluded. He says in another psalm, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest: lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness." (Psalm lv. 6, 7.) Doves can fly swiftly away, far from their enemies, on the least appearance of danger, and this was what David wished to do from his persecutors.

Doves' eyes are very sweet, soft, and liquid. They are fond of bathing themselves in clear water, which makes their eyes look as if washed in milk. This is what the church (or holy people) means when of Jesus she says, "His eyes are as doves' by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set." (Song of Solomon v. 12.) And

Jesus says His bride, or church, has dove's eyes. (See chaps. iv. 1 ; i. 15.) And again, He says to His church,—“Oh ! my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.” (Song of Solomon ii. 14.) Doves sometimes build their nests in the clefts of rocks, or on the sides of old buildings. Jeremiah alludes to this : “Oh ! ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities and dwell in the rock, and be like a dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth.” (Jer. xlviii. 28.) The mourning of doves is often spoken of in the Bible. Isaiah says : “We roar all like bears, and *mourn sore like doves*,” etc. (Isa. lix. 11.) And Ezekiel says, speaking of Israel's troubles : “They that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like *doves of the valleys, all of them mourning*, every one for his iniquity.” (Ezek. vii. 16.)

There is one kind of dove which has a voice so plaintive, that to listen to it for any length of time, makes people quite sad. Hezekiah, in his beautiful song of thanksgiving after his recovery, says : “I did *mourn as a dove* : mine eyes fail with looking upward : O Lord, I am oppressed ; undertake for me.” (Isaiah xxxviii 14.) The prophet Nahum also speaks of the mournful “*tabering of doves upon their breasts*,”—this meant

swelling out their breasts until their necks rested on their bosoms, and then beginning their sorrowful song; "so," he says, "should the captives of Huzzab (or Nineveh) be led away from their land, their heads down, and voices low and sad." (Nah. ii.<sup>7</sup>) •

The dove is meek and harmless; therefore it is an example to Christians. Jesus says to His disciples: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matt. x. 16.) It is a timid bird, and easily frightened, and then it trembles with fear. Hosea says of the Israelites: "They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria." (Hos. xi. 11.)

In another place, the swiftness of the dove's flight is given as a type of the rapid return of Israel to their own land, when God shall restore them to it again: "Who are these, that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows?" (Isa. lx. 8.)

The first mention of doves used in sacrifice, is in Genesis xv. 9, when God said to Abraham: "Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon." Afterwards (in Leviticus i. 14) God commanded Moses and Aaron to offer a turtle-dove, or young pigeon: it was to have its head wrung off, its feathers and crop taken away, its blood wrung

out at the side of the altar, and then burnt with fire. This was a type of the Lord Jesus, who was "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." (Isaiah liii.) Its feathers being plucked off, showed how completely it was left without defence,\* or even covering,—as Jesus was for our sakes. The *poorest* people among the Israelites brought doves and pigeons as sacrifices, because they could not afford to buy bullocks or sheep. Thus, after Jesus was born, the virgin Mary, according to the law, brought an offering of a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons. (See Luke ii. 24.) So you see, even the mother of our Lord Himself was so poor she could not afford to offer more than birds. How kind it was of the Son of God, who, "though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich." Can we ever love or serve Him enough, who was so very good to us?

Doves and pigeons were almost the only birds used as sacrifices: this is why men sold doves within the temple, that those who came to offer them could buy them close at hand. You will, I daresay, recollect when Jesus went into the temple, He "cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that *sold doves*." (Matt. xxi. 12.) It was very

wrong to be buying and selling in God's house. You would be very much shocked to find people selling things in our churches, how much more must the Son of God have been angry to see such sin and wickedness in His Father's house.

The dove has been regarded as an emblem of peace, and so has the olive tree, in which it is very fond of feeding. When God had made the waters of the flood to cease, Noah sent out a dove to see whether the ground was dry, but the dove could not find rest for the sole of her foot, so she came back to the ark. In seven days he sent out the dove again. She returned in the evening; "and lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated." In seven days again the dove was let loose, and this time she returned no more. (Gen. viii. 8—12.) Noah now knew that God's anger was turned from the earth, and soon He would allow him to come out of the ark. Since that time the dove and the olive have been called emblems, or signs, of peace; and beautifully does this gentle, harmless bird show the nature of that peace which the world cannot give, but which God imparts to those who love and fear Him.

But there is some one else of whom the dove is an emblem, and by far the most important one, dear children. After Jesus had condescended



to be baptized by His forerunner, John the Baptist, "Lo, the heavens were opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him: and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. iii. 16, 17; John i. 32.) How honoured was this bird, that the Holy Ghost, who is God Himself, took upon Him its form, as Jesus also does in heaven the form of a lamb. I think you can never see the dove without remembering of, whom it is a type. And never forget how needful it is to pray for this Holy Spirit, that He may come and dwell in your hearts. It is only by the help of this blessed comforter that you can *ever do any thing* that is good. He will lead you to Jesus, He will show you things you know not, He will teach you what is the truth, and how to pray aright. The Holy Spirit must be your great help and guide, or you cannot be brought to Jesus, to be washed in His blood and your sins forgiven. Oh! pray then constantly to God for Christ's sake to give you His Holy Spirit. Do you know this lovely little hymn which follows? I think every child should learn it.

"I knew a little sickly child:

The livelong summer's day,

When all the world was green and bright,

Alone in bed he lay.

There used to come a little dove  
Close to his window small,  
And sing to him with her sweet voice,  
Out of the fir tree tall.

“And when the sick child better grew,  
And he could crawl along,  
Close to his window he would creep,  
And listen to her song.  
And he was gentle in his speech,  
And quiet at his play;  
He would not for the world have made  
That sweet dove fly away.

“There is a holy dove that sings  
To every Christian child,  
That whispers to his little heart  
A song as sweet and mild.  
It is the Holy Spirit of God  
That speaks his soul within,  
That leads him on to all things good,  
And holds him back from sin.

“And he must hear that still small voice,  
Nor tempt it to depart—  
The Spirit great and wonderful  
That whispers to his heart.  
He must be pure, and good, and true;  
Must strive and watch and pray;  
For unresisted sin at last  
Will drive that dove away.”

FROM “HYMNS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.”

## THE QUAIL.

THE quail is a small bird of the partridge kind, though its legs and beak are shaped somewhat differently. In Syria and Palestine, at the present time, it is hunted by Arab chiefs, with hawks, which fiercely rush upon the innocent little thing, hiding under the bushes. The reward of the hawk is, sucking the blood of the poor little bird he has killed.

Satan, like the hawk, is ever ready to pounce upon people, and take their soul's life from them. Quails are migratory, and often are seen flying in great flocks across the sea, at certain seasons. As many as one hundred thousand have been killed within a few miles. When the children of Israel were so ungrateful as to murmur in the wilderness, and cry for flesh to eat, God told Moses to say to them,—“I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel : speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread ; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp,” etc. (Exodus xvi. 12, 13.) This was the first time God sent quails to feed the people. After a time, the people became very wicked, and God sent a fire, which burnt many of them. This, however, did

not prevent them from greedily crying out for flesh, reviling Moses, and wishing they were back again in Egypt, where, they said, they had savoury things to eat. This time God was *very* angry with them. He told Moses He



Quails in the Israelites' Camp.

would give them flesh to eat as a punishment: He said,—“Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days, but even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you; because that ye have despised the Lord which is

among you, and have wept before Him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt? And Moses said, The people among whom I am are six hundred thousand foot men; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?" You see even Moses grew faithless of God's power. But God answered him and said, "Is the Lord's hand waxed short? Thou shalt see now, whether my words shall come to pass unto thee or not." (Numbers xi.) A little further on, in the same chapter, we read,—“There went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth. And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten omers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp. And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, *ere it was chewed*, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague.” (Numbers xi.) Can you

imagine how immense must have been the numbers of these birds? The account says they were two *cubits high*,—that is, about a *yard thick on the ground*; and he that gathered least had more than ten omers, or thirty gallons of what is called dry measure in our country. Well might so many perish, from their dreadful greediness; God punished them by making the things they had so wickedly longed after, the means of their destruction. Two or three times this judgment is mentioned in the Psalms: "The people asked, and He brought quails." (Psalm cv. 40.) And again: "He rained flesh upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea," etc. And then we read again: "For all this they sinned still, and believed not for His wondrous works." (Psalm lxxviii. 27, 32.) I dare say you think these people were very wicked, and that you would not have rebelled as they did. Ah! dear children, all have sad wicked hearts, and are quite as bad as the Israelites: unless God's Spirit is often sought, not one would be better than they. Will you try to learn two lessons from the history of the quails and the children of Israel?

I. When you very much desire anything, and ask God to give it to you, always beg Him *only to do so if it is good for you*,—not to punish

you by granting a desire which may be, though you know it not, a thing that would harm you. Had the Israelites done this, how much better it would have been, both then, and afterwards, for numbers of them died in their sin.

II. Beware of greediness. This is a sin many children, and even grown-up people, often fall into. Sometimes you long for sweetmeats, fruits, or other things, and you are vexed if you do not obtain them. This is wrong: try to deny yourselves even of what you like, for God's sake, and He will love you and bless you. Remember, Jesus says,—“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” (Matt. xvi. 24.) Even little children can thus daily take up their cross, or little self-denials, and follow Jesus, as the lambs of the flock follow their shepherd.

#### THE SPARROW.

PERHAPS of all birds, we know the sparrow the best,—at least, that one known by the name of the house-sparrow; but there are other kinds which are not so well known. There is the mountain or tree-sparrow, the white-throated, the hedge-sparrow, and the solitary-sparrow. It is, however, to the first and last named, the Bible, I think, refers. The house-sparrow is a

pert, tiresome, bold little bird—very mischievous and voracious. It is seen in streets, gardens, fields, orchards,—in fact, wherever man has his habitation. It builds its nest in houses, almost inside them sometimes: thus David said,—“Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.” (Psa. lxxxiv. 3.) You see even the sanctuary itself became a sparrow’s home. It is very bold in obtaining food; and it will snatch a portion from hens, turkeys, pigs, or any other creatures,\* and if repulsed, it will soon return and begin again.

This, at all events, shows us it is a *persevering* little bird; in this all my little friends may copy it, if the thing they want is proper for them. The sparrow is also industrious, and kind to its young ones. It has been thought that a couple of sparrows will kill 4000 caterpillars during one week, for their little ones. Thus they are of great use to gardeners, for caterpillars destroy plants. They are also very careful in building their nests in secure places, where enemies and the effects of weather will not harm them. Jesus Christ taught a beautiful lesson from the sparrows, and God’s care of them. He says,—“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is for-



gotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Luke xii 6, 7; Matt. x. 29—31.) A farthing, even two farthings, are much less than one half-penny of our money; so the sparrows were indeed of little value, when five could be bought for so little, yet even God knows and cares for *them*. Then how much does He care for you? Oh, a great deal indeed! He watches over you all day and all night; He knows all you do and think; all your little pains and sorrows; He ever counts the very hairs of your head, so great is His care of you. Oh! that you could each and all feel this; and that nothing can happen to you which He has not ordered for your good in the end. If you could always remember this, how happy and contented you would be.

There is another passage about the sparrow I wish to notice. In one of the penitential Psalms, that is, Psalms of sorrow and distress for sin, David says,—“I watch, and am as a sparrow alone on the house-top.” (Psa. cii. 7.) A common house-sparrow, when it has lost its mate, will sometimes stand and lament for its dead friend, but I do not think this was the species David spoke of. There is another bird, called the solitary-sparrow, of the thrush kind; it is much larger and prettier, having blue and black

feathers instead of brown. This bird is almost always alone; it sits sad and solitary for hours on the house-top, singing softly to itself: its voice is very sweet, though sad, and gives the idea of holy sorrow. I have no doubt David thought of this bird, when alone to his God he sung of his sins and repentance. It is good to retire from the world as David did, and pour out the heart to God, asking Him for forgiveness.

## THE SWALLOW.

I THINK we must all have a feeling of affection for this pretty and graceful little bird, which has been called "a little winged seraph," by some of its warmest admirers. There is one pleasure always associated with the swallow: when we see it in our own country, we know that spring is coming, and our hearts grow glad and happy. I dare say you all know that the swallow leaves England in winter, and returns when the weather is warmer. It has a wonderful instinct to enable it to know its proper time for returning. Jeremiah says,—“Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.” (Jer. viii. 7.)

There are many different kinds of swallows, but most of them have the same habits. They

are like sparrows, fond of building near to habitations, often even in chimneys; and *they* also, David says, found a home in God's altars. (Psa. lxxxiv. 3.) They are useful in destroying insects, and kind and tender to their young. They are also very swift. Do you know that they fly, at the rate of a mile a minute, for a long distance; more quickly than an express railway train goes. They usually travel for ten hours every day at this rate; and as they are believed to live about ten years, during their lives they have perhaps flown *no less than two millions one hundred and ninety thousand* miles. Think of that! When they leave England, it only takes them a few days to reach lands far across the sea, where there is bright and balmy air, sweet flowers and fruits, when all is withered, and cold, and dead here in winter.

Does not the swallow's flight remind you of the Christian's flight from a world blighted, and cold, and dead in sin, to a better and more beautiful country, even a heavenly? The swallows never know what winter is, they are gone before the bitter frosts come. Saints know no winter; God takes them to Himself when it is time they should leave this wintry world, and go to the realms of never-ending light:

"Where everlasting spring abides,  
And never withering flowers."

## THE COCK AND THE HEN.

OF all tame birds, none are more useful or prized than these. What should we do without the nice fresh eggs which the hen so plentifully lays for us? and how often would the hen be left defenceless and unprovided for, if the cock did not take care of her and the chickens. There are many kinds of these birds; some handsome, some plain, but all useful to man. It is supposed that they were first brought to Europe from the East, possibly from Persia,—but the time of their coming is unknown.

Neither the cock nor the hen are once spoken of in the Old Testament, though several times in the New. You will, I dare say, have often seen how tender the hen is to her chickens. When an enemy comes near, she will fly with all her might, and peck at him; or if she sees danger in the distance, with a loud cackling she calls to her little ones to come and hide under her wings. There are other birds which do this, but not so tenderly as the hen.

God's wings, or protecting care of His people, are often spoken of. Oh, dear children, how delightful in time of trouble to be hidden under the wings of an Almighty Father! David says, in one of his prayers,—“Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of Thy

wings." (Psa. xvii. 8.) And in another Psalm, there is a precious promise to those who believe :  
" *He* (God) shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust." (Psa. xci. 4.)

When Jesus looked upon Jerusalem in all her sins, and knew how great her future punishment would be, He said these beautiful but mournful words: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. xxiii. 37.)

How tender was Jesus,—how loving. Oh how could the Jews refuse to receive Him as their Saviour and be gathered under the wings of His love? When next Jesus spoke of these birds, it was to Peter, the night before His death. Peter, who was always so warm and full of professions of love to Jesus, declared that he would die with Him. But Jesus said, "I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." (Luke xxii. 34.) What was called the "cock-crowing" was a time of reckoning, or telling what o'clock it was. Now, cocks crow at all times, but just when day is beginning to dawn, or give light, they crow the loudest, and

this was what the Jews called the cock-crowing. When Jesus spoke of the sudden coming of the last great day, he said to His disciples, "Watch ye therefore : for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or *at the cock-crowing*, or in the morning : lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, *I say unto all*, Watch." (Mark xiii. 35—37.) And Jesus says the same to all of us, "Watch." Be always looking forward to the last day,—be always ready ; and when Jesus shall appear, and the trumpet of the Archangel shall sound, those who are watching will rise to meet their Master in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, who are called the four Evangelists, and who wrote the Gospels, all mention what Peter did, and how the words of Jesus about his denial came true ; \* but Luke tells us one more thing about it than the others do. Peter followed Jesus to the Judgment Hall, "*afar off*." Had Peter only kept near his Master, he would not, perhaps, have fallen. But he was afraid to own his Lord. He wanted to see what they would do to Him ; but he did not want also to suffer with Him. Many persons follow Jesus "*afar off*." They know He is our perfect Example, they believe He is God as well as man,—perhaps they even

love Him a little; but they are not willing openly, before everyone, to show they wish to be His disciples. They want to follow Him without being laughed at, without being made to suffer for their religion. Is this right? Oh, no! They who would be Jesus' disciples must follow Him in joy or sorrow, at all times, in all ways. They must ever be ready to work for Him, whether in ease or in trouble. Remember this always, for Christ Himself said it: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matt. v. 10—12.) Never fear, therefore, to be laughed at for following near to Jesus; remember you are blessed for being ridiculed and mocked for His sake.

Peter did not go where Jesus was exactly, but he stayed in a place where he could see Him judged. As he sat by the fire, a maid said he was a disciple. But he denied, or told an untruth, and said he was not. Soon after, a man said the same, and again he denied. About an hour after, another person declared he was a disciple, or follower, of Jesus; and

St. Matthew tells us he then began to curse and swear, and deny it. Peter was a Galilean, or a native of Galilee, and was known by his speech, which was what might be called coarse or vulgar,—just as a rough, uneducated, north-countryman would speak. When Peter began to use bad language, St. Luke tells us (what the other Evangelists do not), that “*the Lord turned and looked upon Peter*.” And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.” Peter, the moment before, had heard the cock crow; but it seems that the sorrowful look of Jesus was what had called this to his remembrance. Well might Peter go out and weep bitterly. What a look must that of Jesus have been! How sorrowful, how reproachful, and yet how full of pity. Long, long after, Peter must have thought of that look, and mourned over his sins. But Peter’s downfall made him more careful for the future,—he became afterwards a true and devoted follower of his Lord. As soon as Jesus was risen, He sent Mary to tell His disciples and “**PETER**” of His resurrection; meaning by this to show, that though He had, so grievously sinned, he was forgiven, and was still His beloved follower.

Before His ascension, it was to Peter, Jesus three times gave the command, “Feed my sheep.”



“Feed my lambs.” “Feed my sheep.” And also, to Peter was first given the command to go and proclaim to the Gentiles the riches of Jesus Christ’s Gospel. Afterwards Peter glorified his Lord by his cruel death, for Jesus’ sake; and it is said that when about to suffer, he even begged to be crucified with his head downwards, conceiving it too high an honour to suffer as his Master had done.

Thus did Peter,—once a liar and a coward,—become a champion of the truth, and long, long ago, he has joined that “noble army of martyrs,” of whom we sing each Sunday, in the Te Deum.

#### THE PARTRIDGE.

YOU have often seen partridges in England, I dare say, and perhaps eaten them as well. They are pretty little birds, with feathers chiefly brown, intermingled with red and grey. They are remarkable for their tenderness to their young. The old birds gather them round them when they go out, and help to find them food: and when danger approaches, the parents will try to mislead the enemy, by all sorts of ways, from discovering where their young are concealed, in their nest on the ground.

Partridges live in most countries. Where the climate is cold, God has provided these birds with double feathers to protect them from the

blast. How good and kind God is even to little birds.

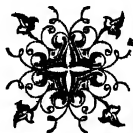
Among the ancient hills of the tribe of Naphtali, the red legged species of partridge is still found in great numbers, and like the quail is hunted with hawks and falcons, which pounce down upon them suddenly, and wound them; after which they suck their victim's blood.

When Saul was hunting to shed David's blood, and David came while the king and his soldiers slept, and took away Saul's spear and cruise of water from him, and afterwards went to the top of the hill near, he called to the king and said,—"Now, therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea; as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains." (1 Sam. xxvi. 20.) A flea was indeed a tiny thing to compare himself to, but it is very likely David meant by his reference to the partridge, that his blood was hunted for, just as the falcon delighted in, and desired to suck the blood of the innocent bird. Jeremiah mentions the partridge, in chapter xvii. verse 11. I do not at present remember any other passage referring to this bird in the Bible.

#### THE CRANE.

THE CRANE is a tall, slender, upright bird, which

lives in marshy places, and feeds on small worms, reptiles, etc. It is migratory, and flies high, and takes distant and wonderful journeys. Many cranes used to be seen in England, but they have now ceased to visit this country. I believe the crane is only twice mentioned in the Bible: in Jeremiah viii. 7, in connection with other birds, as knowing its time of return in season; and Hezekiah speaks of its chattering, in his prayer of thanksgiving for his recovery. (Isaiah xxxviii. 14.) As I have referred before to these verses, I think you will remember them. The crane is the last of the birds regarded as clean.



## Unclean Birds.

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### PART II.

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#### THE EAGLE.

THE eagle is called the "king of birds," even as a lion is the king among beasts. It is unclean, because it is carnivorous,—that is, it eats flesh. Jesus, speaking of its fondness for carrion, or dead flesh, says,—“Whosoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.” (Matt. xxiv. 28.) This passage also is supposed to refer to the Roman armies coming upon the helpless Jews,—the eagle being the standard, or flag of ancient Rome, as it now is of France.

There are many kinds of eagles. The best known are the golden eagle, and the bald eagle. Nearly all eagles have a fondness for flesh, and often carry away to their high nests lambs, fawns, and even sometimes little children. There is one kind of eagle, however, which builds near the sea-shore, and lives almost entirely on fish. The different kinds of eagles spoken of in the

Bible occasionally mean other birds, of which I will tell you by and by. Savage nations have always regarded eagles with great reverence, as emblems of majesty and strength. An Indian warrior knows no greater honour than to wear the feathers of an eagle's tail, for which he will readily part with his best horse. Hundreds, even thousands, of eagles are to be seen in Palestine; so we do not wonder at the many times which this majestic bird is alluded to in the Holy Scriptures,—and to some of these passages I will now refer you. You know, I dare say, that eagles build their nests on high rocks and mountains, and that these nests are called eyries. These are several times spoken of. Job says,—“Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are, there is she.” (Job xxxix. 27—30.)

To the wicked in Edom, God says,—“Though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as an eagle, I will bring thee down from thence.” (Jer. xlix. 16.) And of the same country, Obadiah writes,—“Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou hast set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the

Lord." Some eagles are called bald : and when they become so, at certain times, from casting their feathers, or from age, they are very ugly looking creatures. Micah (i\* 16) says to the idolatrous Israelites,—“ Make thee bald, and poll thee for thy delicate children ; enlarge thy baldness as the eagle ; for they are gone into captivity from thee.” No bird soars so high as the eagle ; and Job speaks of its piercing sight (xxxix. 27—30). It is the only bird which can look at the sun ; for it has a double pair of eyelids, which protect it from being dazzled by the light. The Christian, like the eagle, can look at the Sun of Righteousness, while the wicked cannot bear His beams ; for His brightness seems to them only a consuming fire. The swiftness of the eagle is often spoken of. In God’s threatened judgment for sin, Moses says, —“ The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from afar, from the end of the earth, as *swift as the eagle flieth*.” (Deut. xxviii. 49.) Again, —“ His horses are *swifter than eagles*.” (Jer. iv. 13 ; xlviii. 40.) And also in Jeremiah’s Lamentations, he says of the enemies of his people, —“ Our persecutors are *swifter than the eagles of the heaven* : they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.” (Lam. iv. 19.) The eagle is fierce and voracious, and pounces down with wonderful suddenness

on its prey. To this Job compares the shortness of life, hastening onwards to death:—"My days," he says, "are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good. They are passed away as the swift ships: as *the eagle that hasteth to the prey*." (Job ix. 25, 26.) And Solomon, in his proverbs, says of riches,—“Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they *fly away as an eagle* toward heaven.” (Prov. xxiii. 5.)

Yes, dear children, never set your heart upon riches, or any earthly thing. When death comes, how little you will care whether in life you have been poor or rich, if only you have laid up treasure in heaven,—even spiritual riches. Oh! then, seek, as the Bible says, “to lay up treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal:” remembering also that as we brought nothing into this world, so we can carry nothing out.

If God gives you riches when you are grown up, let it be your earnest wish so to lay them out for God's service, that you may find far better treasure in heaven. There is a beautiful little book called “The King's Messengers.”\*\* Have you read it? If not, try to do so. It

\* By Adams. Published by J. Masters.

tells you how you are to give your money to the poor, the sick, the lame, the blind, and how these messengers of the Great King, who is God, will carry your treasure to Him. Many things are told us about the eagle. In Daniel iv. 33, we read that Nebuchadnezzar's "hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws." This was during that sad time, when he had become as a beast, for seven years. Ezekiel was commanded to speak of an eagle, in the form of a riddle, to the children of Israel; the answer to which showed God's judgments on them. This prophet speaks of the eagle's great wings and feathers, and his dwelling in the lofty cedar trees. (Ezek. xvii.)

Agur says, there were four things which were too wonderful for him to understand: one was, "the way of an eagle in the air." (Prov. xxx. 18, 19.) The same wise man says of disobedient children,—“The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.” (Prov. xxx. 17.) And in some eastern lands this has occurred.

In one of St. John's visions he saw four beasts, “and the fourth, beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy,



holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks to Him, that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. iv. 7-11.) These beasts in heaven are performing God's will just as His redeemed people. What a glorious sight this vision must have been. And it still continues, for they rest not day nor night: they know no weariness in heaven. To praise God is their joy and their delight for ever and ever. You too, dear ones, may see this sight. And you too, I trust, will sometime have a crown to cast at Jesus' feet, and a song to sing around the throne. Yet a little while, and if you love the Lamb of God, you shall join that heavenly host.

Eagles live to a very great age, and are said to keep the appearance of youth and strength even when very old. Most likely this explains two beautiful verses in the Bible. In Psalm, ciii. David, speaking of the good gifts of God to His people, says,—“Who satisfieth thy mouth

with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." And of the *rich spiritual* blessings of believers, Isaiah says,—“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; *they shall mount up with wings as eagles*; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” (Isa. xl. 31.) The meaning of this verse is, that in times of trouble and distress, when even young and strong men are sinking and weary, God shall give His people courage and strength to perform wonders of power and greatness. But the most beautiful passage about the eagle is written in Deut. xxxii. 11 (see also Exod. xix. 41):—“As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him.” These verses are a part of the beautiful song Moses wrote just before his death, and it compares God’s tender care over His people with the eagle’s care for her young ones. However fierce the eagle may be in catching and tearing her prey, she is a most tender parent. When the young ones are thought strong enough to fly, the mother bird knows they must be made to do so, or they will never leave their comfortable nest. First; therefore, she stirs up the nest, so as to



An eagle stirring up her nest.

make them less easy, and more anxious to move from it. If this does not succeed, she flutters over them to make them restless; and if they still refuse to move, she either lifts them up upon her wings and bears them away, or has been even known to push them off the steep side of the high rock whereon their nest is built; knowing that when they are obliged to put forth

their strength, they *can* fly, and will do so. Now in all this the eagle is a wise and kind parent, and we may learn from her a heavenly lesson. Our nest is our home on earth. If we are not kept stirred up and urged on, we are all apt to forget that we have another home to seek, far away? But God stirs up our nest; that is, He sends something to remind us we cannot always live on earth,—perhaps some one we love very much is taken away from us. Our nest, or home, is made uncomfortable or unhappy. We see that our earthly home is not so pleasant as we once thought it, and we begin to wish to “fly away, and be at rest” in heaven. But still, perhaps, we do not quite give our hearts up to the heavenly journey. Then God, by His Spirit, gives conviction of sin, and makes us restless and unhappy; and lastly, if the heart still lingers, by *one* stroke as it were, God takes our nest, or home, away altogether; it may be by a sudden trial which removes all,—or it may be as a kind Father He will lift us on the wings of His love and carry our souls to heaven. I think you will understand what I have said, and when you next see an eagle I hope you will not forget the lessons to be learnt from the eagle and her young.

THE OSSIFRAGE, •

MEANS a kind of sea-eagle, which feeds upon

fish, and is very ravenous in its nature. The word ossifrage comes from a Hebrew word, which means to crush, or to break ; which I suppose refers to the manner in which it seizes its prey. It is only twice mentioned in the Bible, as an unclean bird :—Lev. xi. 13 ; Deut. xiv. 13.

#### THE OSPRAY.

THIS bird is the fish-hawk. It lives of course, as its name tells you, near the sea-shore, building its nest among the rocks ; it is also found by lakes and rivers, where there are plenty of fishes for its food. It is only mentioned among the list of unclean birds :—Lev. xiii. 11.

#### THE VULTURE.

THERE are many varieties of this bird ; the commoner kinds are ugly and unpleasant looking. They have generally bare heads and necks, with a sly and cruel expression in their eyes. Some, however, have handsome plumage, and are large and majestic. Most vultures are cowardly, and all are very greedy and impure. They will eat the most disgusting things, and never leave a dead animal until they have consumed it entirely. They eat until they are so stupefied they can hardly move. The Egyptians, however, regard these birds as sacred ; perhaps because they are useful to them. In Egypt and other eastern

countries vultures are often seen in the streets, eating up all the bad flesh and other impurities which are left there; and in this way they are very useful, because this refuse would poison the air, and render it so unhealthy as to bring on various diseases, if not removed. Vultures have wonderful powers, both of smelling and seeing. If a camel falls down dead in a lonely desert, travellers tell us, scores of vultures will almost instantly be seen flying across to pounce upon it, though none were noticed before. No dead flesh is long left undevoured in countries where these greedy birds dwell. Job, who knew their habits well, however says,—“There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture’s eye hath not seen” (Job xxviii. 7); for God can hide from these birds the sight of that which He pleases. Isaiah, speaking of the desolation of the countries of the enemies of God’s people, says,—“There shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.” (Isa. xxxiv. 15.)

#### THE KITE AND THE GLEDE.

THESE birds are mentioned as unclean. (Lev. xi. 14, and Deut. xiv. 13.) They belong to the hawk tribe of birds, but have a forked tail, in which they differ from other hawks. They are cruel, and are great enemies to little chickens, ducks, etc. Perhaps you have seen a kite

soaring high in the air, gradually coming down lower and lower, until it suddenly pounced upon some giddy little chicken, cruelly seizing it in its talons, and then killing it. Hens look out for kites and hawks, and when they see them in the air, make a loud noise to call their chickens under their wings, to hide them from danger.

### THE HAWK.

THERE are many kinds of these birds ; those best known are the gos-hawk and the sparrow-hawk. The former is very fierce, and feeds on hares, rabbits, etc., as well as small birds, which it tears in pieces before eating. The sparrow-hawk is a very bold bird, and very destructive. It builds its nest in trees, rocks, or ruins. The Egyptians called it a sacred bird, and made it an emblem, or sign, of one of their gods, named Osiris. The ancient Greeks, also, consecrated, or devoted, this bird to their god, Apollo. It was most likely to it that God referred, when speaking to Job, He said,—“Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?” (Job. xxxix. 26.)

### THE RAVEN.

THE raven is a very handsome bird, of large size, graceful form, and beautiful black glossy plumage. The glorious beauty of the Lord Jesus

even, has been compared by Solomon with that of the raven: "His head is as the most fine gold, His locks are bushy, and black as the raven." This bird is strong, active, and clever. He can be taught to speak many words when tamed. He is, however, sly, impudent, and cruel. He has frequently been known to steal valuable things, and hide them from love of mischief. He feeds upon flesh, both alive and dead. He kills young rabbits, birds, etc., and has even sometimes attacked lambs and weak sheep; picking out their eyes while alive, and then, when defenceless, killing and feeding on them. To the raven's habit of plucking out the eye, Agur alludes in that verse I mentioned before, about disobedient children. (See Prov. xxx. 17.)

The raven used to be regarded as a bird of ill-omen,—that is, a bird that came to foretell evil-tidings; and silly people, who knew no better, trembled with fear when they heard its harsh croak. But, thank God for our better knowledge: birds, we know, cannot tell what things are going to happen any more than men; for they have only instinct to guide them, while men have reason and faith. You will, I dare say, remember two or three things about ravens.

First, how Noah sent out the raven from the ark, to see if the waters were abated from the



earth. The raven never came back,—it flew backwards and forwards, feeding, no doubt, on the dead bodies of animals it found so plentifully scattered about; preferring this impure feast to being safe and cared for in Noah's ark; while the gentle dove, finding no rest, returned to her kind master. The dove and the raven are types of good and evil; and the ark, of God's protecting love.

Those who rest in the Saviour's love, are in this ark; and though not safe from storm, flood, or tempest, sin or sorrow, yet they are sheltered, and have a refuge to fly unto when the waves of trouble rage round them. Those who do not trust in Jesus' blood, though they may have been once admitted into the ark by baptism, yet when temptation comes, like the raven, they fly away from the ark,—from the loving care of Jesus,—return to the world, mingle in sinful pleasures, and feed on flattery and vanity. I dare say the raven, when it had satisfied itself each day with flesh, might return and rest at night on the outside of the ark, lest the still undried flood should drown it in the darkness; yet how different it is to be *outside*, instead of *inside* the ark. Dear children, there are many, I fear, resting *outside* the ark of God. During times of health and strength, they mingle with and partake of all kinds of gaiety and sinful pleasure, but in times

of weariness and sorrow they fly back, *outside* the ark to rest. That is, they begin to be particular about outward forms and ceremonies, saying with their lips many prayers, and reading good books; and they think this outside service will save them. But those who truly belong to the ark cannot be content with this. They know that floods of sin are raging without, and they will not trust themselves from their refuge,—Jesus; unless He Himself opens the door and bids them not fear, because all danger is over.

Once God made ravens his messengers. When for the sins of Israel, there was no rain nor dew for three years, God sent his servant Elijah to the brook Cherith, and said to him,—“Thou shalt drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according to the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.” (1 Kings xvii. 4—6.)

Twice a day, you see, did these winged messengers obey God's word; and this appears more wonderful when we consider how fond ravens are of flesh; but Elijah's portion was kept safe for him by the exercise of God's power. How kind

God is to His people : even in times of famine He sends them food, and protects them. And God cares for ravens too. Three times we are told of His care over these birds. God Himself asks Job,—“Who provideth for the raven his food? When his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.” (Job xxxviii. 41.) Again, in Psa. cxlvii 9: “He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.” Jesus Christ teaches His people a beautiful lesson from the ravens. He says,—“Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. *Consider the ravens*: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have store-house nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?” (Luke xii. 22—24.)

Oh! what a happy and blessed thing it would be, if we could always think of these lessons of Jesus. If we are poor or sick, does not Jesus know it? Does He not care? Oh! yes, He does; and if you cry unto Him, He will help and save you. Even should it please Him to take from you all earthly good things, remember that in Heaven there are laid up for those who love Him, brighter and better things, that will last for ever. Whenever you are cast down with poverty or trouble, “*Consider the ravens.*”

## OWLS.

THERE are three kinds of owls mentioned among the list of unclean birds. One is the ostrich, about which I will tell you by and by. The "great owl" is either the bittern or the ibis. But the "little owl" of the Bible, is, that we all know well by name, and perhaps by sight. Then, again, there is a bird called in the Bible (Lev. xiii. 16) the "night-hawk." This is a very ravenous kind of owl, which is known in Eastern lands, and which is so fierce it has sometimes flown through windows and attacked even little children. There are different species of real owls, but that we know best is the common barn-door or screech owl, as it has been called. Of all birds, owls are the most like human beings,—the head being large and round, with great staring eyes. They are what are called *nocturnal* birds, or birds of night. They do not see well by the full light of day, they therefore seek their prey in the dark. They have strong bills, legs, and claws, with very soft feathers; and move so quietly that they pounce upon their prey before the slightest sound is heard. They feed upon mice, rats, small birds, etc., and are very useful in barns for destroying vermin. They are said to catch a mouse about every quarter of an hour. Owls are often called wise birds, and were honoured by the ancients for this. They certainly

look very wise and knowing when we watch them. They live in old buildings, ivy covered towers, holes of trees, and such places. I dare say you have heard the dismal, melancholy noise called hooting, which they make. There is one kind called the tawny owl, which lives in deep woods, and if disturbed in its rest, makes the most horrible unearthly sounds. The mournful voice of owls is referred to in Micah i. 8:—“Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go striped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the *owls*.” David in his sorrow compares himself to “an owl of the desert.” (Psalm cii. 6.) Isaiah, describing the desolations of the country of Israel’s enemies, says,—“The owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness,” etc. “And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for *owls* (or, as this may mean, ostriches). The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow.” (Isaiah xxxiv. 11, 13—15. And the same prophet refers

to it also in chap. xiii. 21). Jeremiah, in pronouncing the destruction of Babylon, that great city, says,—“Therefore the wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, shall dwell there, and the *owls* shall dwell therein : and it shall be no more inhabited for ever ; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.” (Jer. l. 39.)

There is something in the character of this bird which makes us think of a wicked person or spirit. It cannot bear the light of day. It destroys by night. How many wait for the darkness to hide their deeds of wickedness and blood ! Satan, too, chooses times of darkness in the soul,—I mean by this, times when people have gloomy and unhappy feelings. He comes then and tries to put bad things into their minds ; hard and wrong thoughts of God, and sometimes destroys their faith and hope, as suddenly as the owl does its victim. Oh ! beware, dear children, of giving heed to Satan at any time ! If wrong thoughts come to you, tell them to Jesus, and ask Him to wash those stains of sin from your heart. Remember always, in joy or sorrow, light or darkness, Jesus is your best,—your safest friend ; if you do this, Satan will be kept from making a prey of your souls.

## THE CUCKOO.

It is generally thought, that what is called the

cuckoo in the Bible, may mean some kind of sea-gull; but this is not exactly known. The sweet, soft note of the cuckoo, however, is heard in Palestine as well as England, telling of spring, and making our hearts light and glad; and so I think it possibly is mentioned in the Bible by its own name.

Beautiful as the note of the cuckoo is, the bird itself is unclean, and cruel to its young. It builds no nest, it hatches no eggs, but goes and lays them in the nest of some other birds, leaving *them* to hatch and bring up their young ones. It is curious also, that the birds in whose nests the cuckoo's eggs are found, pay more attention to them than their own; and will even push out their own eggs, or young ones, to make room for those of the cuckoo. Little cuckoos, too, are very cruel to their foster brothers and sisters; treat them unkindly, and soon leave the parent birds which have been so good to them. They are fierce and quarrelsome, and regarded as enemies by smaller birds.

What a sad want of gratitude the cuckoo shows. I think ingratitude is one of the very worst of vices. I hope none of you, my young readers, ever forget to repay, as far as you can, the kindness shown to you by friends and relations, and will never, like the cuckoo, be guilty of ingratitude.

## THE CORMORANT.

THE cormorant is greedy and voracious, the most so of all birds which feed upon fish. It is ugly and ungraceful, though it flies rapidly and swims well. It has extraordinary powers for diving and catching fish quickly. It is found all over the world, both in hot and cold climates. The Greenlanders eat it, but its flesh is very coarse and unpleasant. In Isaiah xxxiv. 11, it is alluded to, but it is probably the pelican which is meant. Another verse with the same meaning may be found in Zeph. ii. 14.

## THE IBIS.

WHAT is called the great owl, in Lev. xi. 17, is generally thought to be the ibis. A very slender, graceful bird, of which there are different kinds,—the glossy ibis, and the white ibis, etc. These birds were held sacred, and worshiped by the ancient Egyptians. They brought them up, and kept them in their idol temples. When they died, they were embalmed, or preserved so that they could not decay, and buried with reverence. Many mummies of embalmed ibises are still found at a place called Memphis, in Egypt. It is not exactly known why the Egyptians worshiped them, but it has been thought because they destroyed many venomous serpents, and so protected the people. How thankful we should



be that we have been taught to know our God, as great and wonderful, without any visible form. How sad to think of beasts, birds, reptiles, and even insects being held in reverence by poor idolaters.

#### THE GOOSE.

THIS bird is not mentioned by name in the Bible ; it is called the swan ; but is supposed to be a kind of goose ; most likely one that had different habits to our bird of the same name, as it is pronounced unclean. (Lev. xi. 18.) What kind of bird it was, I cannot exactly tell you, and learned men seem to differ in opinion on the subject.

#### THE PELICAN.

THE pelican is a large bird, of a whitish colour tinged with rose. It has an enormous pouch, or bag, below its bill, in which it places fish when caught. It feeds its young out of this bag, and it used to be supposed from this, that the pelican pierced its own breast, and fed its young with its blood. Of course then the pelican was thought a most devoted parent, and beautiful types were made from the circumstance. But those who have studied the habits of this bird, tell us that it is greedy and selfish, and shows no particular love for its young ones. Instead of feeding them first, it eats as much as it can, then swallows the rest

into its bag, from which it takes out a part for its young. It is an ugly looking bird, considered dismal and melancholy. It is always found in solitary places, and this is one reason why several verses in the Bible speak of the desolation of places which the pelican, or cormorant, as it is called occasionally, is said to inhabit. (See Isaiah xxxiv. 11; Zeph. ii. 14.) David compares himself in his misery with this bird. He says,—“I am like a pelican of the wilderness.” (Psalm cii. 6.)

#### THE GIER EAGLE OR SWAN.

THE gier eagle of the Bible has generally been thought to mean the swan, that most beautiful and graceful of birds. It is very fond of its young, and from love to them will fiercely attack their enemies. It has been said that the swan, when it feels itself dying, calmly floats down the stream, singing a low, sad song. Some persons, however, say this is not true,—that the voice of the swan is ever harsh and disagreeable. “Do you remember the words of that beautiful poem :—

“What is that, mother?

The swan, my love :—

He is floating down from his native grove :

No loved one now, no nestling nigh,

He is floating down by himself to die :

Death darkens his eye, and unplumes his wings,  
Yet the sweetest song is the last he sings.  
Live so, my love, that when death shall come,  
Swan-like and sweet, it may waft thee home."

DOANE.

### THE STORK.

THERE are three different kinds of storks, but the one called the *white* stork is most generally known. Its body is white, its wings black, while its bill and legs are scarlet. It has been by many nations regarded as a sacred bird, and worshiped also ; so that there *was* a time when to kill a stork was regarded as a great crime, and even punished by death. The Moslems still regard this bird with great reverence. It is very voracious, and on this account is useful in killing vermin, snakes, worms, mice, etc. The stork is a grave and austere-looking bird : it often stands on one leg, in one position, for a long time, looking as if it were thinking deeply. It cannot sing, but it makes a curious chattering noise. It builds sometimes in marshy places, sometimes in the tops of trees, or on rocky cliffs ; but it is also very fond of building on the tops of houses, chimneys, old ruins, etc.,—and this it does even in crowded cities. Storks, in some places, are so much liked, that people put boxes for them on the tops of their houses. It is a very curious fact that, though storks are migratory birds, they re-

turn each year with most extraordinary wisdom to their old habitation, and even to their own box. I remember hearing some friends say that, in travelling, they were told that the storks kept even to the same day of their return, and that, as the time was near at hand, if they waited they would see them come to their old nests. Is not this wonderful instinct? Jeremiah knew this habit of the storks when he said,—“Yea, the stork knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.” (Jer. viii. 7.) Storks are very fond of their young, and very kind to them,—and what is better still, the young ones repay this kindness afterwards, by being attentive to their aged parents. Surely if birds, to whom God has only given instinct, do this, children, who have sense and know their duty, should love and obey their parents, and strive to repay all their kindness and trouble. There is one other verse which speaks of the stork,—it is in Psalm civ. 17.

## THE HERON.

I BELIEVE the heron is only once mentioned in the Bible, and that as an unclean bird. It is beautiful, and of the stork kind—smaller and more graceful however. It feeds upon fish, and is greedy and gloomy in disposition, as well as

irritable. It delights in lonely places ; and will stand almost all day watching for its prey, eating ravenously. There are many different kinds of this bird, but as no Bible lessons are taught by them, I do not mention them. The lesson, however, the Jews would learn from the sight of the heron was, that God had mentioned it as unclean,—and this would serve to make them think of the defilement and dreadfulness of sin.

#### THE LAPWING OR HOOPCE

THIS bird, like the heron, is only named among the unclean birds. (Lev. xi.) It is about the size of a pigeon. Its feathers are composed of several colours ; black, white, red, green, purple, and orange are all seen in its plumage,—it is consequently, very beautiful in appearance ; but in its habits is very unclean. You must remember, dear children, that it is not a beautiful outside in people which makes a good heart—and it is the heart which God looks at. Never despise, therefore, persons whose faces are plain,—you do not know how dear they may be to God, nor how much good there may be within their hearts.

#### THE BAT.

BATS are creatures between birds and beasts. They can fly almost as swiftly as swallows. They can also feel, smell, and hear with wonderful

quickness ; yet, in the formation of their bodies, they are more like animals than birds. There are no less than twenty different kinds of bats known in this country. When cold weather sets in, instead of migrating to other countries, the bats crowd together in dark lonely places, and remain in a sleepy state until the warm weather returns again. They feed by night. They fly noiselessly, and sometimes as they dart along, flap their wings against people. There is something cold and unearthly in their touch,—reminding us of evil spirits, whose deeds are ever deeds of darkness. Isaiah tells us of a day when idolatry shall cease in the world: he says,—“In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they have made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats.” (Isaiah ii. 20.)

## THE OSTRICH.

I HAVE, I think, told you before, that the ostrich is sometimes called the owl, in the Bible. It is, as you know, I dare say, the largest of birds. Its height is from seven to eight feet. It cannot fly, as it has very small wings, and also a peculiarity in its feathers, which make it impossible for it to raise itself from the ground. In this respect, therefore, it has something of the nature of a four-footed animal, instead of a bird. If the ostrich cannot fly, however, God has given it a

swiftness of foot which is astonishing. It can run for hours, faster than any horse can gallop. It is often hunted, but is so difficult to run down, that stratagem, or deception, is practised to catch it. It generally runs in a circle, and this assists the hunter in taking it. When attacked, it is very fierce, and hisses loudly and furiously at its enemies. The eggs of the ostrich are much prized for food : they are rich and nourishing. The power of the ostrich to digest anything is wonderful. It has been known to swallow stones, lead, etc., without feeling any harm. The ostrich is a bird of the desert, living chiefly in Arabia and Africa. It is often alluded to in the Bible. Job, who probably lived in Arabia, must often have seen this bird in its native deserts, for he two or three times mentions it. In the 39th chapter of the book of Job, God speaks to him thus,—"Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks ? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich ? which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust, and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers ; her labour is in vain without fear ; because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath He imparted to her understanding. What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the

horse and his rider." (Job xxxix. 13—19.) The Ostrich is not unkind to her young ones when hatched; but if she finds her eggs have been touched or disturbed during her absence from them, she will crush and break them all to pieces. The ostrich is described as solitary,—hating the society of man. Job in his misery, says,—“I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to *owls* ;” or, as it means, ostriches. (Job xxx. 29.) In Jeremiah’s lamentation over the cruelty of the Jews in the time of their troubles, he says,—“The daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.” (Lam. iv. 3.) How often we find beasts, birds, or reptiles, used as comparisons for good or wicked people. Do you not think even in days when there were so few schools, or opportunities of learning, that the writers of the Bible were very clever observing men, to be so well acquainted with the nature and history of these creatures? We, who have so many more privileges, I fear make far less use of our time, and often see far less in these creatures than did these holy men of old. I should like you, my dear children, to feel, and observe God in all His works. Nothing lives or moves, which has not some use, some work to do, even though we may not at first perceive it. Let us try and trace the hand of God in all His works.



## THE BITTERN.

THE bittern is a bird of the heron tribe, and about the same size. It lives chiefly in low marshy places, and feeds on frogs, lizards, etc. It is a timid, solitary bird, and never flies during the day-time, but sits in silence and solitude among reeds and rushes. It has a most peculiar cry when flying, and at night makes a loud booming noise, which sounds solemn and impressive. When attacked it defends itself with great bravery; and when wounded does not flinch, but looks calmly at its destroyer, and if strength remains, will then attack him with great fury. There are three passages in the Bible I want to point out to you about the bittern. Isaiah was told by God to pronounce terrible woes and desolations on Babylon, because they had treated the Jews with so much cruelty,—“I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts.” (Isa xiv. 23) Again, of the land of His people’s enemies, God says,—“The cormorant and the bittern shall possess it.” (Is. xxxiv. 11.) And the prophet Zephaniah pronounces, in God’s name, the woes of Nineveh,—“And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it;

their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds," etc. (Zeph. ii. 14.) As the bittern is so solitary a bird, it would not be found except where there was great desolation, and no trace of man left; so that if Nineveh and Babylon became the abode of bitterns, we may be assured the destruction of these places was complete. And most surely God's word was verified. Even the very situation of these once great cities was for hundreds and hundreds of years unknown; and they indeed became the haunts of wild beasts and birds. Never forget that what God has said, always comes true. As He threatened destruction to these wicked cities, so He still threatens the fire that is ever burning, to those who persist in sin. He now gives time for repentance. Oh! dear children, repent of your sins while God is still giving you time: so shall you be saved from the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched.

## THE PEACOCK.

I THINK I need not describe the peacock to you. All, I dare say, have seen this most beautiful of birds, and been delighted with his gorgeous, dazzling colours, and his splendid train, which he sometimes opens out like an immense fan, or allows to sweep behind him, as he moves along

with grace and majesty. All the colours of gems and flowers seem mingled together in this magnificent bird. Its natural home is in the East. Immense numbers are still found wild in parts of India. It has, however, long been known in England, and prized as a beautiful ornament to gardens and parks. In former times, peacocks were killed and eaten at kings' banquets or feasts, and considered a great delicacy. They were served in dishes of gold, and handed about with great solemnity. That most magnificent of kings, Solomon (who brought to Jerusalem everything that was exquisite and lovely, and even made silver itself so plentiful that it was of as little value as stones), possessed peacocks. Once every three years he sent out his navy of ships to Tarshish, to bring treasures to him; and among these were peacocks. (Kings x 22) When God would teach Job His power and His greatness, He asked,—“Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks?” (Job xxxix. 13.) Well it became Job to confess how small he was in God's sight, who could, by the word of His power, make such beautiful and goodly things. And it is also our duty, dear children, to think humbly of ourselves, not to try to make ourselves appear greater than we are; for in God's sight we must all be impure and unholy, and nothing that we can do can be of use to Him. Remember God

loves *humility*, and if He sees you meek and retiring, He will bless you,—for “God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble.”

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### HYMN ON GOD'S CARE OF HIS PEOPLE.

Upon a bed of sickness laid,  
 An open window near  
 Gave me a sound, as though it said,—  
 A child of want is here.

It was a prayer that rose on high,  
 Although no words were heard;  
 It was a quick, repeated cry,—  
 The chirrup of a bird.

And was there One who would attend  
 That faint and feeble cry?  
 Was there an ever present friend  
 Who would its wants supply?

O yes! the Lord's great name be praised,  
 His ever open ear;  
 There's not a cry in trouble raised,  
 But *that* is bent to hear.

But will the Lord for sparrows care,  
 Who cannot speak a word?  
 Will God stoop down to hear the prayer,—  
 The chirrup of a bird?

O yes ! it is the Lord who gives  
Both life and its supply,  
To every moving thing that lives,  
Or it must faint and die.

There's not a bird can hop around,  
Or traverse through the air,  
Or peck a crumb from off the ground,  
But God first placed it there.

Then let us come to God with prayer,  
And seek Him day by day ;  
The Lord who does for sparrows care,  
Will hear when children pray.

(From "*The Child's Book of Poetry*.")



## QUESTIONS ON BIRDS.

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Q. Is much said about birds in the Bible ?

A. Yes. They are used as comparisons with many persons and things.

Q. What is a carnivorous bird ?

A. One that feeds on flesh.

Q. What were the principal birds used for sacrifice ?

A. Doves and pigeons.

Q. What tree is the dove fond of building in ?

A. The olive.

Q. Who says, " Oh ! that I had the wings of a dove " ?

A. David.

Q. What did Jesus tell His disciples to be ?

A. " Harmless as doves."

Q. Of what was the dove in sacrifice a type ?

A. Of Jesus Christ.

Q. Of what is the dove an emblem ?

A. Peace.

**Q.** Who descended from heaven in the form of a dove ?

**A.** The Holy Ghost.

**Q.** Who sent out a dove from the ark ?

**A.** Noah.

**Q.** What sort of bird is the quail ?

**A.** Like a small partridge.

**Q.** To whom were quails sent in great numbers ?

**A.** The Israelites in the wilderness.

**Q.** Where does Jesus teach a lesson of faith about the sparrow ?

**A.** In Luke xii. 16, and Matt. x. 29—31.

**Q.** How are sparrows useful ?

**A.** In destroying caterpillars, etc.

**Q.** Who speaks of the swallow returning at its proper time ?

**A.** Jeremiah (viii. 7).

**Q.** How swiftly can a swallow fly ?

**A.** At the rate of a mile a minute.

**Q.** For what is the hen noted ?

**A.** Tenderness to its young.

**Q.** Who said 'He would have gathered the Jews as a hen gathered her brood under her wings ?

**A.** Jesus Christ.

**Q.** Tell me something of the cock mentioned in the Bible ?

**A.** It crowed three times, and brought to

Peter's mind the words of Jesus, and his shameful denial of his Lord.

*Q.* Are cocks and hens ever named in the Old Testament ?

*A.* No.

*Q.* Name the two passages where the crane is mentioned.

*A.* Isa. xxxviii. 14, and Jer. viii. 7.

*Q.* What bird is called the king of birds ?

*A.* The eagle.

*Q.* What kind of bird is the eagle ?

*A.* A carnivorous bird.

*Q.* What is the nest of an eagle called ?

*A.* An eyrie.

*Q.* Are eagles often spoken of in the Bible ?

*A.* Yes.

*Q.* With what are the eagles' eyes protected ?

*A.* A double pair of eyelids.

*Q.* What does the Bible say about eagles and disobedient children ?

*A.* "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

*Q.* Where does God compare His care of His people to the tenderness of the eagle over her young ones ?

*A.* Deut. xxxii. 12.

*Q.* What is the ossifrage ?



A. A kind of sea-eagle.

Q. Was it a clean bird?

A. No.

Q. What is the ospray?

A. The fish-hawk.

Q. For what are vultures useful?

A. For clearing away bad flesh from the streets of eastern cities, and for eating up other impurities.

Q. Who says "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen"?

A. Job (xxviii. 7).

Q. Were the kite and glade clean or unclean birds?

A. Unclean.

Q. What nation regarded hawks as sacred?

A. The Egyptians.

Q. Whose beauty was compared to the plumage of the raven?

A. Jesus Christ's.

Q. Who sent out a raven from the ark?

A. Noah.

Q. Who was fed by ravens?

A. Elijah.

Q. Who tells us to "consider the ravens"?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. What kind of bird is the owl?

A. A bird of night, or a nocturnal bird.

Q. Who compared himself to an owl of the desert?

A. David.

Q. Is it quite certain what kind of bird the cuckoo of the Bible means?

A. No.

Q. What can the cormorant do?

A. It can catch fish with great cleverness.

Q. Who worshiped the ibis?

A. The Egyptians.

Q. By what name is the ibis called in the Bible?

A. The great owl.

Q. What does the swan of the Bible mean?

A. The goose, it is supposed.

Q. Is it true that the pelican wounds itself to feed its young?

A. No: on the contrary, it is a very greedy bird.

Q. Who compares himself in his loneliness to a pelican of the wilderness?

A. David. (Ps. cii. 6.)

Q. What is supposed to be meant by the gier-eagle of the Bible?

A. The swan.

Q. What sort of birds are the storks?

A. Grave and austere.

Q. Are they very regular in returning each year to their former neighbourhood?

A. Yes ; even to the exact place.

Q. Who speaks of this ?

A. Jeremiah (viii. 7).

Q. What trees do they like for nests ?

A. Fir trees. (Ps. civ. 17.)

Q. Where is the heron mentioned in the Bible ?

A. In the list of unclean birds. (Lev. xi.)

Q. Name a bird of very gorgeous plumage mentioned among the unclean birds.

A. The lapwing, or hoopoe.

Q. What is the bat ?

A. A nocturnal creature, between a bird and a beast.

Q. Where is the bat mentioned ?

A. In Isa. ii. 20.

Q. Name the largest bird.

A. The ostrich.

Q. How fast can it run ?

A. As fast as a horse at full gallop.

Q. Where does God speak of the ostrich ?

A. Job xxxix. 13—19.

Q. Who else speaks of the ostrich ?

A. Jeremiah. (Lam. iv. 3.)

Q. What sort of bird is the bittern ?

A. Of the heron kind.

Q. Of what is it fond ?

A. Solitude.

Q. What cities were to be the habitation of the bittern, when in ruins ?

*A.* Babylon and Nineveh.

*Q.* What is the most beautiful of birds?

*A.* The peacock.

*Q.* Where are peacocks found in great numbers?

*A.* India.

*Q.* Who had peacocks brought from Tarshish?

*A.* Solomon.

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END OF BIRDS.

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## INSECTS OF THE BIBLE.

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You all know that God formed insects ; but if I were to ask you, what is the difference between birds, beasts, reptiles, and insects, you might not tell me very clearly. You would say, perhaps, that they looked different, or were smaller ; but this would not be the proper distinction. Now I will just tell you one or two things in which insects differ from other creatures. Insects are little animals which have neither bones nor cartilages, or gristle. They have trunks, and eyes unprotected, or not covered by eye-lashes, in which they are different from *most* other creatures. There are vast numbers of different kinds of insects, far more than either of birds, or of beasts. Some have wings, some not : some are dull-looking and ugly, others have rich, bright, dazzling colours, or delicate beauty of form. In nothing do we see more of the wonderful skill and wisdom of an Almighty God than in the different forms of these tiny creatures. The more we examine them, even by the aid of a microscope, the more wonderful do they appear. Their wings, feet, eyes, and the manner in which their watery blood is circulated, all tell of a Divine Being whose power and goodness is

amazing, beyond our feeble understanding. They were of two kinds, clean and unclean. We read of the distinction in Lev. xi. 21—23.—“These may ye eat, of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth; even these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind. But all other flying creeping things, which have four feet, shall be an abomination unto you.” So you see there were few insects allowed to be used by the Jews. But still God cares for insects, preserves them and gives them food; for “the Lord is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works.” “The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.” (Psa. cxlv.) Surely if God cares for tiny insects He will care for you, who are His children, bought with the precious blood of His dear Son. There are numbers of insects mentioned in the Bible, and these being nearly all unclean, would, as they buzzed about in the air, serve to keep the Israelites in constant remembrance of holy and unholy things, and show them how much they should mourn over and lament for the sins which had brought uncleanness and impurity into the world.

## Insects.

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### PART I.

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#### THE ANT.

PERHAPS of all the wonderful creatures God in His goodness has created, none are more curious, none more extraordinary than ants. I could fill pages by telling you of their marvellous wisdom and skill. In England we do not see so much of the working of the ants as in hotter countries. There they live under ground, and build wonderful dwellings for themselves, which rise sometimes as high as *twelve* feet. They are always of a conical shape,—that is the shape of a loaf of lump sugar, long and rounded at the top. In these wonderful dwellings there are tunnels, passages, and galleries, built with the greatest neatness and order. The houses are so arranged as to protect them from both wind and rain, and to be near such trees as they find useful for food.

Many lessons may people learn from these amazing little creatures. They are industrious ;



they are orderly,—and everything they do is done by method. Each ant knows his own work,—where to begin and end. They are careful, for while summer lasts they are busily engaged collecting food for the coming winter, and laying it by in their storehouse. Solomon advises men to learn instruction from these insects. “Go to the ant thou sluggard ; consider her ways, and be wise : which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.” (Prov. vi. 6—8.) I have read that in the Eastern land, where Solomon lived, there are many of the working people so lazy, that unless an overseer,—that is a person to watch and make them work,—is provided, no work would be done at all. Also, that the people of the present day inhabiting the land, never think of laying by anything against the time of sickness or old age ; besides which they are sluggards, or lazy sleepy people ; well, therefore, might the wisest of men write a lesson which should suit them so well in the ages to come.

There are many different kinds of ants, but most of them have the same good qualities. They are brave and active,—more active than any other creature for their size. They will attack an animal much larger than themselves, if they require it for food. They are also very kind and tender to their young ; if their homes

are attacked and destroyed, each ant seizes a young one on its back, and carries it to a place of safety. Again the ants are unselfish. When one makes a fortunate discovery of what it considers a treasure, instead of keeping the knowledge to itself, it at once runs and communicates to its companions its joy, wishing them to share in it. How I wish all children would take a lesson from the ants, and when they have a new toy or book, that they would share their pleasures with their little friends who are less fortunate than themselves.

But now I am going to tell you something, for which, though I marvel at their ingenuity, I do not admire them. If a settlement of ants requires more labourers to complete their work, they actually wait until the eggs of another kind of ant are just ready for hatching; they then send out scouts, or spies, to find their nests, and these, when they have discovered them, return and tell the others. A regiment of ants is then formed, headed by eight or ten leaders, who in turns show the way to their neighbours' dominions. When the other ants see them coming, they well know their purpose, and rush out to prevent their enemy from entering the house. A fierce battle ensues, but the soldier ants always win; they then rush up to the nest, tear it open, and enter the very heart of the poor vanquished

ants; each one seizes an egg, and bears it away in triumph to its own domain, where, among the other eggs of the tribe, they are soon hatched; and when hatched, become the servants of their enemies, cheerfully performing, far from their own kindred, all the hardest work. Now I have something more to tell you about this, which is very curious. The ants which steal these eggs, are always red or *pale* coloured ants. Those from whom they steal are always perfectly black, so are their eggs when hatched. Now of what is this an exact emblem? Of that dreadful, cruel practice of slave-stealing and slave-holding. Who steal the poor negroes from their homes and friends? Men with pale faces,—men *calling themselves Christians*. They take away the poor blacks far from their own bright and happy lands,—sell them like beasts; and from henceforth they are slaves, working hard and long, and without wages. But there is this difference between ants and Christians. The ants do not know right from wrong,—they do not know that it is cruel thus to steal from their neighbours. Christians, or at least people who call themselves Christians, know well that it is cruel and wicked to do this, yet still they practise it. Christians have a law given them to follow: it is “to love their neighbours as themselves.” This they cannot do when they wantonly tear children from their parents, pa-

rents from their children. Oh! when you say your prayers, dear children, do not forget to ask God to let this inhuman practice cease, and that He will teach white men "to do unto others as they would that men should do unto them."

I have told you very little about ants, but enough, I think, to show you that they are what are described by Agur, when he said—"There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are *exceeding wise*: the ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer." (Prov. xxx. 24, 25.)

### THE BEE.

WONDERFUL and curious as the little ant is, it is less known and admired than the bee. What little boy or girl does not know these lines:—

"How doth the little busy bee  
Improve each shining hour,  
And gather honey all the day  
From every opening flower.

"How skilfully she builds her cell,  
How neat she spreads her wax,  
And labours hard to store it well  
With the sweet food she makes."

No doubt you have all tasted that sweet food which is called honey, but do you ever think how much time and trouble the bee has taken to ga-

ther it? How many flowers she has rifled,—how many hours, while the sun was shining, she has been flying from flower to flower, never tired,—buzzing cheerfully along, until her little honey bag will hold no more; she then flies home, and puts into the beautifully neat cell the honey she has made.

Have you ever been fortunate enough to see a bee magnified, or made larger to your eye? It has a proboscis, or trunk, not unlike the elephant's; and with this proboscis it can draw up the honey easily from the flowers, and place it in the bag God has given it for the purpose. Then its sting is curious. It has three parts. First, there is the sheath or case; next, two very small sharp points, or barbs, which when pushed into anything make a painful wound. There is also the venomous fluid which the bee sends through the sheath, and which causes the wound to swell and inflame so much. This sting is the bee's only weapon of defence, which God has provided to keep off its enemies. Sometimes it strikes its sting so sharply in anger, that it is left in the flesh of its victim; then the bee itself dies. This shows the punishment which immoderate anger brings with it. Wax, which is so useful for many purposes, is a substance formed in the stomach of the bee from the honey it eats, and is afterwards kneaded in its mouth, to make

it sufficiently soft for building those beautiful little cells in which it places the honey, ready to feed upon in winter. *You* have always seen bees in a hive, I dare say ; but in most countries they are wild,—often building in the hollows of trees and rocks. They abound in Palestine even now. You know, I dare say, the story of Samson, who killed a lion, and afterwards found a



• Samson finding the swarm of bees in the carcase of the lion.

swarm of bees had settled in its dead body.  
(Judges xiv. 8.)

Honey from rocks was considered a great

delicacy. Moses says of God's goodness to the Israelites: "He made him to suck honey out of the rock." (Deut. xxxii. 13.) And in Psa. lxxxix. 16: "He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee."

Bees are wonderfully industrious creatures, and they are workers without selfishness. The honey they gather is as much for others as themselves. How different from many busy-workers amongst men, who, I am sorry to say, only care to toil for their own wants, and seem to have no wish to provide for, and make their fellow-creatures happy also. Would they could learn a lesson from this little insect, in its unselfish life! Bees have also certain rules to which they all submit. They are governed by one queen, who lays all the eggs, and directs them in all things. Even our own dear queen Victoria, is not served with greater care or attention than the queen bee. She is a very busy queen, her time is much taken up by going from cell to cell, in each of which she places an egg. She has always with her twelve attendants, or servants, who go before her, but who, like people in the presence of royalty, always turn their face towards her. These bees clear the way. When she is tired and stays to rest, they feed her with honey, humbly come to her and gently caress her. Some-

times the queen dies, or is taken away before a new queen is born. Then there is a most tremendous commotion in the hive, just as there would be if the people of any country were left without a leader. For two\* or three days all is bustle and commotion, at length the bees enter a cell where common eggs are laid, break down the divisions and throw three cells into one, polish the walls, and put *one* egg there. Soon it is hatched into a little maggot, or tiny worm. It is carefully fed with what is called royal bee bread, only allowed for queens to eat. On the sixteenth day, from the maggot comes a new queen, who is hailed with the greatest delight. Sometimes it happens, however, that there are two queens; then generally the older one leaves the hive, and is followed by a large number of the bees. She flies about for a time, then settles, often on the bough of a tree, and her subjects follow her; there they hang together in what is called a swarm, until they are found, and placed in a new hive, which they from that time make their home. Sometimes there are more queens still left in the old hive; the reigning queen, if she finds it out, would kill them, so the working bees keep these poor queens prisoners, well-guarded from her. Is not all this very wonderful? And does it not make you better understand the wisdom and goodness of our great God?



Have you ever heard of the drones? These are the lazy bees, who eat the honey but do not work for it. After a time the working bees, angry and indignant, rise up, fall upon them, and sting them to death. Idleness is a great sin. God never intended any of His creatures, man, beast, bird, or insect to do nothing. St. Paul says, "if any man will not work, neither shall he eat." God works Himself,—Jesus is ever making intercession for us,—the Holy Spirit is ever working in the hearts of men,—the holy company of the redeemed souls in heaven "rest not day and night" praising and blessing God.

Some people think the bliss of heaven consists in doing nothing,—in *resting*. Heaven is a rest dear children, but it is a rest from *sin*, not from employment. There is no toil in heaven because there is no *weariness*. Therefore, working will be delightful, and never tiring. Little children, learn a lesson from the young bees again. As soon as ever the working bee gains the use of its wings, it at once seems to be aware of its duties. It knows it is born to help and toil for others. So it begins to gather honey from the tree, and a kind of gummy substance with which to line the cells, and at night brings home its little store with the older bees.

You may be busy bees, little friends. You may

gather the honey of knowledge, and bring it, like "ministering children," to those who are unable to go out and gather for themselves ; for many bees there are, and people too, whose work lies within the hive, or in so narrow a space, that they cannot obtain honey or knowledge. The best honey, however, which you can gather, remember, is that taken from the flowers of God's Word. David said, "Oh ! how sweet are thy words unto my mouth ; yea, sweeter than honey and the honey comb."

I could tell you much more of the habits of bees, but I might tire you. I want, however, to say a little more about honey and bees as they are spoken of in the Bible, and then pass on to another insect.

Bees were sometimes threatened as a punishment, on account of their stinging, which is very painful. Thus, in Isaiah vii. 18, 19, we read,—  
"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes." When bees are angry they buzz about furiously, and often end by stinging severely. Thus the Psalmist says of the wicked : "They compassed

me about like bees ; they are quenched as the fire of thorns." (Psa. cxviii. 12.)

In 1 Sam. xiv. 25, 26, you may read an account of Jonathan, Saul's son, finding honey in a wood and eating it, when his father had commanded the people to fast ; by which he nearly met with his death. There are a great many allusions to honey in the Proverbs. I will tell you a few of them. "Pleasant words are as an honey-comb sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Prov. xvi. 24.) Yes, dear children, I like to hear pleasant, kind words ; how many a sorrowful heart has been made happier by kind soothing words, which are as sweet to the soul as honey to the mouth. Remember these lines :—

"A little word of kindness spoken,  
 " A motion or a tear,—  
 \* .. Has often healed a heart that's broken,  
 Or made a friend sincere."

Always try to drop a kind word from your lips when you can, and do not forget the wise man's comparison. Here is another of his pieces of wisdom :—"My son, eat thou honey, because it is good ; and the honey-comb which is sweet to thy taste." (Prov. xxiv. 13 ; also Prov. v. 3.) The honey here meant is that spiritual honey of God's Word, of which I have spoken before. Then again, Solomon advises that too much

honey should not be eaten ; by which he means that to receive too much flattery, or praise, is not good : it makes the soul ill, just as too much honey makes the stomach sickly. Praise is a dangerous thing, dear children. We are all apt to think more of ourselves than we ought to think. Beware of those who try to give you more praise than your conscience makes you feel you deserve. (Read Prov. xxv. 16—27 ; Prov. xxvii. 7.) Honey was brought from various countries. When Joseph's brethren were going down to Egypt the second time to buy corn, their father said unto them,—“Do this ; take of the best fruits of the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a *little honey*, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds.” This man was their brother Joseph, whom they knew not. (Gen. xliii. 11.) We have another instance of honey being sent as a present by the wicked king Jeroboam to the prophet Abijah, of which you may read 1 Kings xiv. 3. We know that the land of Canaan was very rich in honey, and that it was exported, or sent out, to other countries by the merchants. (See Ezekiel xxvii. 19.) When God spake to Moses in Horeb, out of the burning bush, and told him he should guide His people to Canaan, He said thus :—“And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians,

and to bring them up out of that land, unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing *with milk and honey.*" (Ex. iii. 8.) And this is again mentioned, Lev. xx. 24; Deut. viii. 8. A land where honey abounds must be a land of many sweet flowers, and we know that they do not grow well in barren countries; so that a land of milk and honey, was a rich, well watered country.

The Israelites, in one of their murmurings, spoke of Egypt as a land flowing with milk and honey (see Numb. xvi. 13), but they knew not how much better was the land to which their gracious God was leading them. The king of Assyria, Sennacherib, when he wanted to persuade the people of Judah to leave their own land and come over to him, said, that Assyria was a land flowing with milk and honey, and many other good things.

Honey appears to have been much used for food, both eaten plain, and mixed with flour. Of this the Israelites thought the manna God sent them was made. (See Ex. xvi. 31.) Sometimes honey was brought as an offering. (2 Chron. xxxi. 5.) But honey and leaven, or yeast, was not to be used in the sacrifices. (Lev. ii. 11.) Of Jesus Christ it was prophesied,—“ Butter and honey shall He eat, that He may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.” (Is. vii. 15.) This

again means, that the food was spiritual food. That the meat and drink of Jesus should be soft and sweet (as butter and honey); that kindly words should come from His lips and heart to poor weak sinners. (See also Is. vii. 22, and Song of Sol. v. 1.)

After the resurrection of Jesus Christ, He suddenly appeared to His disciples, saying,—“Peace be unto you.” They could not believe it was Jesus. They thought it was a spirit. To show them that He had a body and flesh and bones like themselves, He made them touch Him, after which He said unto them,—“Have ye here any meat?” And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and an *honey-comb*. (Luke xxiv. 36—42.) Honey has been compared with many good things. Jesus, speaking to His church, whom He calls His spouse, or wife, says,—“Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honey-comb: honey and milk are under thy tongue,” etc. (Song of Solomon iv. 11.) The judgments of God are compared with honey and the honey-comb, though they are sweeter, and more to be desired. (Psa. xix. 10.) And again, “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.” (Psa. cxix. 103.)

I hope, dear young friends, you will feel, like holy David, that the words of God are sweeter far than all the world can give, and that your

highest pleasure will be to know and keep those words.

### THE BEETLE.

THE beetle is only once mentioned in the Bible. (Lev. xi. 22.) It is mentioned as an insect which might be used for food. But as beetles never have been so used, it is supposed that it was a particular kind of locust; and as learned men differ on the point, I, of course, cannot tell you what insect is here meant, but I think it is not likely to be the beetle,—at least not the insect we know by that name.

### THE LOCUST.

LOCUSTS were the only insects which were clean, or such as we know to have been certainly used by the Jews for food. But of all insects, none have been a greater scourge or plague to man than these creatures; so that we all must regard them with a sort of horror, knowing what a sad punishment they have been, and still are, to the nations of hot countries. England is not troubled by them: it is too cold, though locusts have been found even in our country. We ought to be thankful to be saved from so great a calamity; for some places in Europe have been severely visited by these voracious, hungry creatures, but not so often as Syria, Egypt, and other countries of the East. A locust is like a grass-

hopper, though larger,—being about the size of a man's thumb. There are various kinds of locusts, but those called the migrating locusts are the most dreaded, since they move from place to place, eating up every green thing they come near. There are millions and millions and millions of these insects sometimes seen together. In spring they lay their eggs, which are hatched in about eight weeks. The young locusts, though they cannot at first fly, leap with wonderful quickness, and speedily begin their work of destruction. When they fly altogether, the whole air is darkened. One traveller gives an account of locusts covering a space of 2,000 square miles; and of a cloud twenty-two feet high, containing many thousands, one above another. The noise of their coming is heard far off, and is like a loud, rushing wind. Sometimes a strong wind drives them into the sea, from which their dead bodies are washed up in countless numbers: and the horrible smell thus caused, poisons the whole air round for many miles. These migratory locusts are of a reddish brown colour, with bluish legs, which serve to make the flying cloud appear very black, and warns people of their approach. But little can be done to prevent them from carrying on the work of destruction, and so causing a famine afterwards in the land. In Syria and Palestine,



they light fires, dig holes for them to fall into, and beat about with sticks, but the few that perish make little difference. Every green thing is eaten up. A field of corn, or of grass, looking beautiful in the morning, is barren and stripped long before night. A description of the state of the land afflicted by locusts, is given by the prophet Joel :—"The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses ; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained : all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men ; they shall climb the wall like men of war ; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks : neither shall one thrust another ; they shall walk every one in his path : and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city ; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses ; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief," etc. (Joel ii. 4—9.)

Those who have with their own eyes seen how locusts proceed, say that this is a wonderfully true description. They are said to look exactly like tiny men on horseback. And as for

their climbing the wall like men-of-war, this is really true,—for without waiting to find any entrance to a place, they mount up the wall with the greatest quickness. If houses were not strongly secured, they would even enter into them, and destroy the flowers which have been removed from the gardens for protection.

You will remember the plague of locusts sent upon Pharaoh and his people, when he would not let the Children of Israel go. Moses was told to warn Pharaoh that if the locusts came they should “cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth; and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field; and they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither they nor their fathers, nor thy fathers’ fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day.” (Exod. x. 5, 6.) Well might the wicked king’s servants pray him not to refuse to let the Israelites go, knowing that Egypt was now injured, and that the locusts would finish the work of destruction. But his heart was hardened; so the locusts came, and ate up every green thing, and destroyed the land.

When God spoke of the good things he would

give His people if they were obedient, He also warned them of the punishments He would send on them if they sinned ; among which He says, —“Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in ; for the locust shall consume it,” etc. “All the trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.” (Deut. xxviii. 38—42.)

When Solomon had built the Temple, and it was consecrated, or given up to God, he prayed for the people ; and in one part of his prayer he asked God that if at any time the plague of locusts should come, and the people prayed, God would graciously hear and take them away. (See 1 Kings viii. 37, 38.) And we find (in 2 Chron. vii. 13) God graciously promising that He will hear them.

Locusts were insects which astonished Agur the wise man, by the order in which they marched : he says,—“The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands.” (Prov. xxx. 27.) Their swiftness of movement is noticed by Isaiah (chap. xxxiii. 4) ; and their great numbers by the Psalmist (Psa. cv. 34), and by the prophet Nahum (chap. iii. 15). The same prophet speaks of wicked kings being like locusts and grasshoppers, camping in the hedges in “the cold day ; but when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they

are." (Nahum iii. 17.) This is true of locusts, which retire into the shelter of hedges when the air gets cold and the sun goes down. Winds have a great effect upon them. Of this David speaks in his unhappiness: "I am gone like a shadow when it declineth; I am tossed up and down as the locust." (Psa. cix. 23.)

False teachers are compared with locusts, in the Revelation: "There came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; *but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads,*" etc. "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abad-

don, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon," which means a destroyer. (Rev. ix.)

Now, as I said before, dear children, these locusts mean false teachers, or ministers. But you see these wicked men are only to have power to hurt those who have not the seal of God in their foreheads. Who are they who have this mark? What mark does it mean? You have received once a *mark* on your foreheads, a sign of a cross,—but it does not mean that, though every true believer will desire to possess that mark also. It is a spiritual mark which God places on His children: "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Those who have brought their sins in faith to Jesus, and have been washed in His blood, these have the true mark, and upon them false teachers and their errors shall have no power.

These locusts have crowns like gold; that is, they look grand outwardly. They have hair like women; they seem mild and gentle, but their teeth are lions' teeth; for false doctrine destroys people's souls as a lion destroys his prey. Their king is the devil; they obey him and work for him.

You have need, dear children, to beware of false teachers, and to read St. John's advice: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many

false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John iv. 1.) If in St. John's time there were many false teachers, surely there are more now. Each year, as it passes on, brings out more false doctrines: men are starting up who deny Jesus,—who do not trust in His Word, and in His blood. Now the Bible tells us such men should come into the world, and lead many people astray; therefore they are fulfilling prophecy. Now, dear ones, when any one speaks in your hearing of these things, or seeks to persuade you not to believe what you have learnt in your Bibles, do not give heed to them. Keep close to God's Word; ask to be guided by His Spirit, and you will not be hurt by false teachers, for God's mark will be upon you. There is one other thing I must tell you about locusts, before I pass to something else.

Of John the Baptist we are told, "his meat was locusts and wild honey." (Matt. iii. 4.) Locusts are much eaten still, by the Arabs. In some eastern towns there are locust shops, and they are sold by measure. They are eaten fried in butter, and then mixed with honey. In times of great scarcity they have been dried and ground into powder, from which a kind of bread is made. You see that out of the very insect which causes famine and distress, God produces food. From our first parents came sin, but out of the ruins

of their fall, God built up the temple of salvation, through Jesus Christ,—for He can, and often does, bring good out of evil. Who was John the Baptist? I think you will tell me, the forerunner of Jesus Christ,—the man who went before Him to prepare His way. Do you remember what Jesus said of him?—That he was more than a prophet: “For this is he of whom it is written, behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” (Matt. xi. 9—11.) I do not believe people often think of the meaning of these words. If the question was asked, Who was the greatest man mentioned in the Bible? few would remember that Jesus says, John the Baptist. But when we consider the high honours heaped upon him, do we not see that it was so? What so great a distinction as going before the Lord Himself, and then baptizing his own Saviour? Well might he say,—“I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?” John was humble, sincere, self-denying and courageous. How many years he spent alone in the desert with God, engaged no doubt in continued prayer with Him, to fit him for his high and holy calling. How little

he cared for the good things of this world : he wore a rough garment of camels' hair, and a leather girdle, or belt ; he drank only water, and fed upon locusts, which is the food of the poorest people, and ate the wild honey of the desert. He was content to become lower and lower, as his disciples left him and followed Jesus. He said,—“He must increase, but I must decrease.” John never thought of himself: Jesus, Jesus only, was to be exalted and glorified. He cared not what became of himself. What a lesson is this for every one ! Should we not be content to put self out of the way altogether, and seek not that our own name may be great, but our Saviour's ? John was the first minister who taught his disciples a *form* of prayer. We do not know what the prayer was, but we know that the disciples of Jesus said,—“Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” (Luke xi. 1, 2.) And then Jesus taught them that beautiful form of prayer called “The Lord's Prayer,” which I hope you all know. This shows us Jesus approves of a *form* of prayer ; and St. Paul also, writing to Timothy, tells him to “hold fast the form of sound words.”

Those of you, dear little friends, who belong to the Church of England, should value that beautiful form of prayer appointed for service, which so simply expresses all our wants and desires.



I need not tell you of John the Baptist's last days on earth, and the cruel death he died. In heaven as well as on earth (according to his manhood) he was the forerunner of his Lord and Master, —entering paradise before the death of Jesus; to whom, however, he is again united by the ascension, in human form, of our Saviour Jesus.

### THE GNAT.

THIS is a little winged insect, with a slight sting. When gnats come in swarms, as they often do near water or in damp places, they become extremely troublesome, and their sting is painful. Jesus Christ, as He walked by the shores of the Sea of Galilee, would see immense quantities of them. He often taught lessons from the things He saw around Him, and thus the gnat was chosen on one occasion to show the character of the Pharisees. These people thought themselves very holy, and were particular about little things which were not of much consequence, while they cared less for the great ones, which were. Thus Jesus says to them,—"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

(Matt. xxiii. 23, 24.) A gnat is a tiny thing, a camel a large one, yet the Pharisees would try to swallow the large thing rather than the smaller. That is, they would pretend to be particular to pay a tax of herbs, such as mint, but they refused to do works of faith and love to their fellow creatures. There are people who do this in the world now. I hope none of you, my young friends, will forget the *little* duties God expects from you, whilst you pay every attention to great things also.

#### THE FLEA.

THE flea is a troublesome little creature, which sucks the blood of both men and animals. Seen through a microscope, there is much that is wonderful and curious about it. It can leap higher than any creature of its size : one thousand times as high as itself. The Arabs have the greatest horror of fleas, though they abound in many parts of Palestine. If, however, they are found in an Arab's tent, the whole party leave the place, and seek another encampment. The flea is only twice mentioned in the Bible. When Saul was hunting after David, and David had the power of killing the king, and refused to do so, in speaking to Saul, he said :—"After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea?" etc. (1 Sam. xxiv. 14.). And again,—“For

the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea." etc. (1 Sam. xxvi. 20.) David by this, wished to make himself appear small and insignificant in the eyes of Saul, hoping thus to protect himself from the king's violence.

### THE MAGGOT OR WORM.

I MENTION this insect because it is referred to in the Bible apart from the fly, which it afterwards becomes. Maggot is not the name for any separate insect, but a name given to a great many insects in an imperfect state. You know that the fowls which are in the farm-yards, have been once eggs, then downy chickens, and then fowls; so all flies have been first eggs, then maggots, then flies; all moths, or butterflies, have been first eggs, then caterpillars, then moths and butterflies.\* Every bird has its own kind of egg, and every fly and butterfly has its own kind of maggot or caterpillar. The principal difference between a maggot and a caterpillar is, that the maggot's body is made with rings, so that it moves itself forward by means of them, and that the caterpillar has legs to crawl with. The eggs of maggots are often hatched in any food that is not sweet and fresh. When the children of Israel were warned not to keep any *manna* until the next day, those who disobeyed the command found that in the morning worms

were in it, and that the food smelt disagreeably. These worms mean the maggots, of which I have been telling you. The account of the sending of manna, and of the people's disobedience, you may read in Ex. xvi. 20.



## Insects.

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### PART II.

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#### THE CATERPILLAR.

THERE are so many different kinds of these insects, that I cannot describe them to you here. No doubt you have often seen green caterpillars hanging on gooseberry or cabbage leaves; or watched hairy red and brown ones slowly crawling along your path. They are very destructive creatures, and increase even faster than locusts. They have been sent by God as a punishment for sin. Thus we read: "He gave also their increase unto the caterpillars." (Psa. lxxviii. 46.) And again: "He spake and the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number, and did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground." (Psa. cv. 34, 35.) By the mouth of Isaiah God threatened the enemies of His church: "Your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar." (Isaiah

xxxiii. 4.) There are more verses also, of which I will tell you when I speak of other kinds of insects. Do you know that butterflies,—those beautiful and lovely winged things, which fly from flower to flower,—were once ugly crawling caterpillars? When the butterfly's short life



Stages of the butterfly life—egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, butterfly.

is drawing to a close, it carefully lays its eggs where the sun's warm rays will reach them, and there it leaves them; content to die, knowing by its instinct, that it has performed the work given to it. All winter these eggs lie, apparently un-

heeded, but when spring appears, the sun's warm rays again shine on them, and soon a kind of caterpillar makes its appearance, which at once begins to eat greedily. By and by a change comes over the caterpillar. It no longer eats, but a curious brown shell covers it, and to all appearance it is dead,—dried up and useless. Again there is a change: the shell of this chrysalis, as it is called, bursts, and from it comes,—not the dull heavy looking caterpillar which it was before, but a gay butterfly, with bright and glorious wings, flying from flower to flower in the highest enjoyment.

There is a beautiful type in this of the resurrection of the people of God. They die.—They are put in the coffin, and laid in the cold grave. But a time is coming, when from the grave they shall burst forth in new and heavenly beauty, to mount up in the air to meet their Saviour. Hear what St. Paul says about the glorious change, which shall pass over the bodies of those which sleep in Jesus:—"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is the sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." "Behold, I show you a mystery; we of Hisll not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, like ths moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the

last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. xv. 42—44; 51, 52.) Perhaps you do not quite understand the meaning of these glorious verses. Corruption means that which is decayed, or perished. Bodies of flesh and blood are sown, or put into the ground when dead, and they are soon destroyed ; but when raised, God shall give them a body which is incorruptible ; that is, which shall never perish. Dishonour means, that which is lowering or humbling. It is very humbling to see the bodies of those, once so fair and comely, put away in the cold dark ground : but though sown in dishonour, they shall be raised in glory. They shall be bright and glistening as the angels. The natural body is that which we all *now* have, with flesh and blood ; the new body will be spiritual and never fading, like unto that which Jesus now has in heaven, as He sits at the right hand of God : that same body in which He rose again from the dead. All this change, dear children, shall take place in a moment,—quick as thought,—when that last great trumpet shall sound, which you and I, and all who now live, or ever have lived, shall hear, in that great day of judgment. It is a solemn thought, but need not cause gloom to those who love Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.



### THE CANKERWORM AND THE PALMER-WORM

BELONG to that class of insects which do not feed upon leaves so much as upon grain,—as wheat or barley. They are, however, extremely destructive, and destroyed much food in seasons when God sent them to punish sin. Joel says,—“That which the palmer-worm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.” (Joel i. 4.) The same prophet however promised, by inspiration, that God would take away these plagues after a time: “I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm, my great army which I sent among you.” (Joel ii. 25.) Of the woes to come upon Nineveh it is said: “There shall the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off, it shall eat thee up like the cankerworm: make thyself many as the cankerworm, make thyself many as the locust. Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the cankerworm spoileth, and fleeth away.” (Nahum iii. 15, 16.) God speaking of His punishments on Israel and their great wickedness, says: “I have smitten you with blasting

and mildew : when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmer-worm devoured them : yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord." (Amos iv. 9.) Oh ! unhappy Israel, rebelling against Him who had been so good and gracious to them. Their crime has brought its chastisement ; and scattered and despised, the Jew is bearing a worse and longer punishment than when chastened for a time by God's instruments, the insects and worms of the earth.

#### THE EARTH WORM.

DID it ever strike you, dear children, as you carelessly perhaps, stepped upon the little crawling worm, that poor and insignificant and despised as you thought it, the worm is several times spoken of in the Bible, and there compared with people who are, in God's sight, but as worms of the earth ? Worms, though you may think them useless things, are in reality most valuable. Each worm has a little work to do ; and in this it sets an example to many, who seem to think they are born for no other reason than to enjoy themselves, and only to care for their own pleasure. Worms, as I dare say you have noticed, have long thin bodies composed of many rings,—some have more than a hundred. These rings help it to bore into the earth. It

has a mouth, by which it sucks in food,—but no teeth. Worms are, as you know, very abundant. Have you ever watched a man digging up the earth, and seen the countless numbers which are thrown up by the spade? Gardeners think they do harm by eating and destroying young plants, but many are ignorant how really useful these little worms are. They bore down into the ground, by which they make it lighter and softer, so that the air and water can enter it better: this working underneath is like the working of a spade on the top, therefore it is of important use in making things grow more quickly and better. In fields, where worms are not so abundant, the crops do not grow nearly so well.

The poor worms have many enemies. Birds, insects, and fishes, all feed upon them in innumerable quantities. There is one species, not the commonest kind however, which, if cut in pieces, most singularly does not die, but increases,—each piece becoming a distinct worm. The common worm also, if cut in two, does not all perish,—the head part will elongate and become whole as before, while the tail part, which has been cut off, dies away.

And now about what the Bible says of the worm. Bildad, Job's friend, says,—“How then can man be justified (or made clear) with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?

Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in His sight: how much less man, that is a worm; and the Son of man, which is a worm?" (Job xxv. 4—6.) David also says,—“I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.” (Psa. xxii. 6.) This Psalm is supposed to be spoken of Jesus in that sorrowful time, when His heart was broken for the sins of the world, and the light of God’s face was hid from Him.

In speaking words of comfort to His sinful people Israel, God says,—“Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee.” (Isa. xli. 14.) Of the enemies of God’s people it was said,—“They shall lick up the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee.” (Micah vii. 17.)

People often pray, dear children, and call themselves worms of the earth in God’s sight; but how many really feel thus humbly of themselves? how many think that just as you might crush a poor worm beneath your foot, so might God crush them; and that it is of His mercies only they are not consumed, for He is good and gracious unto them? Try really to feel your littleness before God, and let a poor crawling worm teach you a lesson of humility.

## THE FLY.

THIS winged insect you know as well as I do. You have seen it flying about the windows and rooms often, and have heard the curious buzzing noise it makes. I hope, however, you have never been guilty of that very shocking habit, which some children have, of torturing poor little flies. I have seen cruel children pull off their legs, or their pretty shining wings, to see how they could manage to get along without them. This is wicked,—and God, who made the flies and takes them under His care, is displeased to see so cruel a disposition in children. To cause pain or suffering to anything without a good reason is wicked, and moreover shows a cowardly disposition.

Flies, when they swarm in great numbers, can cause much torment. We who live in England, where the weather is too cold to allow them to increase greatly, do not know what misery they produce. To punish the Israelites, God threatened flies. (See Isa. vii. 18.) When dead in great quantities, they also make an unpleasant smell. This is referred to by Solomon. (See Eccles. x. 1.) You have read also, and remember I dare say, that grievous plague of flies which God sent into the land of Egypt, upon Pharaoh and his people; and how God would not let them distress the children of Israel. This

plague seems to have been felt very much by Pharaoh,—more than most of the others, for he promised at first to let the people go; but as soon as the flies were taken away again his heart was hardened.

I think I have told you nearly all that is said of flies in the Bible. I will now mention another insect, sent as a plague upon Egypt.

LICE.

THERE are several different kinds of these disgusting little insects. They are very tiny, but when viewed through a microscope there is much that is curious in their formation. They are almost invariably found where persons or animals are very dirty,—and therefore, to those who are clean, these insects are particularly unpleasant.

When lice were sent as one of the plagues of Egypt, the magicians, or wise men who pretended they could work miracles, were obliged to confess that they could not produce these swarms of lice; and they said to Pharaoh,—“This is the finger of God;” by which they meant that none but a powerful Creator could have formed and sent this plague. For all that Pharaoh did not care, but hardened his heart and would not let the people go. (See Exod. viii. 16.) The plague of flies and lice is thus

spoken of in the Psalms: "He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies and lice in all their coasts." (Psa. cv. 31.)

### THE HORNET

Is an insect of the wasp kind, only very much larger and much more to be dreaded. Its sting, in countries where it is of the strongest and largest kind, is severe, and often affects people very seriously. It has four wings instead of two, and flies with great force. It will eat flesh, as well as fruit and honey, and such things; and it also feeds upon wasps, when it can catch them.

That the hornet must have been a terrible insect, we may learn from places in the Bible, where God sends, or threatens to send it as a punishment. For instance—upon the Canaanites, to prepare the way for His people to enter into their land: "I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee." (Exod. xxiii. 28.) Again: "Moreover the Lord thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed." (Deut. vii. 20.) Before the death of Joshua, after the Israelites had entered Canaan, he tells them how God had fulfilled these threatenings: "I sent the hornet before you, which

drive them out from before you ; even the two kings of the Ammorites: but not with thy sword nor with thy bow." (Joshua xxiv. 12.)

### THE SPIDER.

SPIDERS are not pretty insects,—they are rather repulsive to look at than otherwise ; but there are many things very interesting about them, and curious also. There are many different varieties of them ; some very large, others so small they can hardly be seen by the naked eye. The spiders, however, generally referred to in the Bible, are the kinds called the house and garden spiders. They have eight long legs, and either six or eight tiny eyes, which little eyes you could not see without a magnifying glass. Spiders are sly creatures,—they seem formed only to deceive and destroy poor little insects ; but for this they must not be blamed, since it is their nature thus to procure their food, which consists of flies and small insects.

You have often seen a spider's web, but perhaps you have not thought how wonderful is the power of this insect, to spin so fine a thread from a kind of gum contained in a little bag in its body. This web is formed chiefly to catch its prey ; and when it is entangled, the spider rushes upon and kills it. There are some very venomous spiders, whose bite always kills in-



sects even much larger than themselves. The spider is very persevering ; often and often it misses fixing the slender thread of its web where it wishes to have it placed ; yet it does not despair, but tries again.

I dare say you have heard the story of Robert Bruce, the king of Scotland who had so frequently fought for his kingdom and been vanquished. One morning as he lay on a lowly bed, sadly thinking, he watched a little spider trying to fix the thread of her web, but in vain. Many times she repeated her efforts, until, at last she succeeded. The king learnt a lesson from the spider, roused himself once more, again went to battle, fought, and was victorious. This should be to you, my children, a good example too. How often have you complained over some lesson that you could not learn, when it only required a little more patience and a few trials to master it thoroughly.

Each spider lays about one thousand eggs in a season ; these she carefully incloses in a little bag, or strong web, where they are kept until hatched, when she lets them out, guarding them with the greatest care, carrying the weak ones on her own back. Soon, however, the little ones, like the young bees, begin their work, make webs for themselves, and catch their tiny prey. They do not wish to be a trouble to their pa-

rents longer than needful, therefore they provide for themselves as soon as possible, just as industrious sons and daughters should do. In Job's time the webs of spiders were spoken of. We read thus:—"The hypocrite's hope shall perish: whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be as a spider's web." (Job viii. 14.) Spiders were one of the four wonderful things mentioned in Proverbs:—"The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces." (Prov. xxx. 28.) This means that a spider will spin its web in the palace of the king with as great ease as in a lowly cottage, for it knows no distinction of persons, and is found in all places. Isaiah speaks thus:—"They (the wicked) hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web." (Isa. lix. 5.) Just as the spider spins its web to catch flies, so do wicked people still try to catch good people by their temptations, and persuade them into sin.

### THE GRASSHOPPER

Is a little creature resembling a locust in shape, though it is more slender and less strong. There are several varieties of this insect, but that best known is the pretty little green one, marked with a brown stripe, which is found so often in the meadows in spring and summer. One thing is very curious. God has provided the female

grasshopper with a kind of sharp instrument, which she can throw out or bring in as she pleases. When she is ready to lay her eggs, in the autumn, she bores a hole with this sharp thing into the earth, and into it, one by one, she drops her eggs, and there leaves them, until the spring. Soon after this, the poor grasshopper begins to fade away, and gently and uncomplainingly she droops and dies.—Spring comes. The sun, with its bright beams, warms these little eggs, on which there has been the watchful eye of a kind Creator. Soon little insects no bigger than a flea crawl out, and begin to feed on grass. Another change takes place: the outer coating the little thing wears begins to be unfit for use; it wants its wings, with which it is at present unprovided, and begins to pant and push and make violent efforts to be free; and at length casts off its coating, and then has found its wings. Though weak at first, soon it gains strength, and enjoys its little summer life. You see God provides for these little orphan insects. They have no parents; they are left alone; but the sun shines upon them, and they are glad and happy. Have any of you, dear children, lost your kind parents? Are you sad when you see other children telling their wants and troubles to their fathers and mothers? Ah! do not be troubled. If God takes care of the little grass-

hoppers, He will also take care of you, if you *ask* Him. But, remember, you *must* ask Him : and He will make a far brighter, more blessed, sun to shine on you, even the sun of righteousness, Jesus Christ, whose Spirit shall dwell in your hearts, making you holy happy children. Perhaps you will think of this when, in the soft twilight of a summer's evening, you hear the little grasshoppers chirping together among the grass. •

The grasshopper, being of the locust kind, was allowed to be eaten by the Israelites. (See Lev. xi. 22.) They are insects that increase rapidly at certain seasons. When the Midianites came against the Israelites, they are twice described as "grasshoppers for multitude." (Judg. vi. 5 ; vii. 12.) They are *timid*, frightened, little creatures. Of the war horse God says : "Canst thou make him afraid as the grasshopper?" (Job xxxix. 20.) Do you know that beautiful chapter, the 12th of Ecclesiastes, which begins,—“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.” In the verses which follow, there is a description of old age and its infirmities, which are compared with many things : “The keepers of the house” are the hands, “the house” is the body. The hands tremble in old

age. "The grinders cease because they are few ; and those that look out of the windows shall be darkened." The grinders are the teeth, which generally fall out in the aged ; the windows are the eyes, which become dim. "The doors shut," etc., mean that feeble old people do not generally have pleasure in talking much, or in listening to music, and from deafness, often cannot hear the singing of birds. They also become afraid of little things. "The almond tree flourishes," which means, the hair becomes white, "*and the grasshopper shall be a burden*, and desire shall fail : because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets." (Eccles. xii.) Grasshoppers are very light creatures, and this is used to show how hard every little thing will become to those who are old and weak. They will not care for things which were once a pleasure. Man's "long home" is the grave. When all these signs come to pass, people know that death must be drawing near.

Dear children, I want you to think of that first verse of this chapter. I want you to remember your Creator *now*. Now, in the days of your youth, and health, and strength. Now, while you have time and opportunity. Do not be persuaded by those who would say to you, "Time enough to think of being religious when you are old." How do you know you will live

to be old? You may die soon, in the time of your early years. But if not, if you live to be old, do you wish only to give the feeble days of your life to God,—the God who made you,—the Saviour who died for you? Do you wish to spend your childhood and youth in the service of the devil,—to give *him* your *best* time, and *God* the *worst*? Surely, surely not.

And there is one more thing I want to say to you. Do you think it will be *easier* to turn to God when you are older? Oh, dear ones, this is a sad mistake. Every year you lose makes it harder, and harder, and harder to turn to God. The heart becomes less soft. The conscience less tender. Now, therefore, now is the time to “remember your Creator in the days of your youth, while *the evil days* come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them.”

#### THE MOTH

Is the only insect left now to tell you about. Moths and butterflies are much the same species of insects, though there are several distinctions, which are well known to those who have made these beautiful creatures their study. The curious horn-like substance which stands out of the heads of these insects, differs in the butterflies and moths: in the former it is rounded,

in the latter it is pointed. Moths, too, have more feet ; some have as many as sixteen. There are more than a thousand different varieties of moths, of various sizes, and many different colors and shapes. They are born in the same manner as the butterflies,—from caterpillars, which afterwards become chrysalids. Moths, unlike the butterflies, generally are insects of the night instead of the day,—these nightly ones have no tongues.

The difference between these insects is curious. The butterfly revels in the bright and glorious sunshine ; and when it is gloomy or dark, the poor little creature hides itself, droops, and seems sad. The moth, on the contrary, loves only either darkness or artificial light, such as gas or candles.

I think we may see a type of God's people and those of the evil one, in these two insects. The butterflies are like those who are only happy in the light of Jesus, who is the Sun to them ; and when He withdraws His face from them they are troubled and distressed, and know no joy until they feel Him in their hearts again. The moths, on the contrary, resemble those who are children of the world only,—who do not care for the light of the Sun of righteousness : they prefer either the lights of earthly pleasure, or the darkness of sin. In this I hope, dear ones, you will resemble only the butterflies.

Some moths are useful, others very destructive. Silk worms are imperfect moths of a particular kind ; and what could be done without them in these days of luxury and dress ? There are others, however, called the clothes moths, which are very destructive, and of these the Bible speaks : I will tell you about them presently. There is a small moth, too ; I dare say you have often seen it in a summer's evening, flitting about the rooms,—and when the candles are lighted, unable to resist the blaze, it flutters so near that its delicate wings catch fire, and it sinks down to die. This habit of the moth has been compared to those who are tempted to do what is wrong. Instead of avoiding evil, they draw nearer and nearer the forbidden pleasure, until they are unable to resist it, and are caught in the flame of their desire, and perish. Think of the giddy moth when you are tempted to go too near what you know is wrong.

Two or three times in the book of Job the moth is spoken of. Eliphaz, Job's friend, speaking of God's greatness and wisdom, and of man's littleness, says,—“ Behold, He (God) put no trust in His servants ; and His angels He charged with folly : how much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth ? ” You know the lightest touch destroys this poor soft



insect; yet in God's sight we, who are but as dust before Him, are no better.

As I told you before, moths are very destructive to clothes; they soon eat holes in them. Job refers to this (in chap. xiii. 28): twice, also, Isaiah does. "They all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up." (Isa. l. 9.) And again: "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men; neither be ye afraid of their revilings; for the moth shall eat them up like a garment; and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." (Isa. li. 8.) Then again, if you will look in Hosea (chap. v. 12), you will find God's judgments compared with the destructiveness of moths, and the foolishness of providing much for earthly things, Job xxvii. 18. The apostle James also speaks thus to men who thought only of their wealth: "Your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten." (James v. 2.)

There are two Psalms used in the beautiful but solemn Burial Service of the Church, in one of which, in the Bible version, we read these sad words: "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man

is vanity." (Psa. xxxix. 11.) How sad, that man's sin and wickedness should have brought so much sorrow into the world! But for sin, there would have been no death, no grave. Yet God has graciously given us a remedy,—even the hope of eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The last verse I wish you to refer to about the moth, is in Matt. vi. 19. It is a part of Jesus Christ's Sermon on the Mount: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where *moth* and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

What are heavenly treasures? God's love, God's promises,—felt and believed in the heart. The redemption of Jesus is a treasure; His blood cleanseth from all sin those who believe in Him. And what has Jesus laid up, as treasures in heaven, for those who love Him? Mansions of glory: crowns never fading, which shine as the stars: white robes, washed in His blood, which will never be stained by sin: golden harps, and voices to sing a new song, even of praise to Him. and new names; even His Father's name shall be written for them in

white stones. They shall eat moreover of hidden manna; rich spiritual food which the world knows not of. They shall sit on thrones of glory, and be pillars in the temple of God, and go no more out from it. These and many others are heavenly treasures: treasures which will never perish, never rust, never decay. The white robe can never be destroyed by the moth, for it is of lasting material—even heavenly. All things here on earth fade, and change, and die, and have stamped upon them—"Passing away." All things in heaven bear the impress of "Eternity—Everlasting!"

Will you not have these treasures? You may if you ask for them. No one is ever cast out who seeks Jesus in the right way. In that fair and happy country, crowns and robes shall be yours, besides many things which none but those already there can know,—which no earthly tongue can describe,—but which God has prepared for those who love and serve Him here on earth. Ask, therefore, and they shall be given you. Seek, and you shall find. Knock, and the heavenly gates shall be opened unto you.

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## QUESTIONS ON INSECTS.

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**Q.** Tell me some difference between insects and other creatures?

**A.** Insects have neither bones nor gristle. They have trunks and protected eyes.

**Q.** What insects were clean to the Israelites?

**A.** The different kinds of locusts.

**Q.** What insect does Solomon tell the sluggard to take a lesson from?

**A.** The ant.

**Q.** What does the ant do in summer?

**A.** Prepares its meat against the cold of winter.

**Q.** How do ants get servants for themselves?

**A.** They steal from their neighbours.

**Q.** Whom are they like in this?

**A.** Those who carry away poor black people to make slaves of them.

**Q.** What insect makes honey?

**A.** The bee.

**Q.** By what are bees governed?

**A.** By a queen.

**Q.** What does the queen do?

**A.** She lays eggs, and places them in little cells.

Q. Do bees always live in hives ?

A. No. Wild bees have nests in the trunks of trees and various other places.

Q. What does the bee do when angry ?

A. It stings people.

Q. Who found a swarm of bees in the dead body of a lion ?

A. Samson.

Q. What land did God tell the Israelites flowed with milk and honey ?

A. Canaan.

Q. What did this mean ?

A. That it was a rich land, full of grass and beautiful flowers.

Q. What do the bees do with those of their brothers who will not work ?

A. They sting them to death.

Q. Ought all people to be industrious ?

A. Yes : God hates idleness.

Q. What does Solomon say is as sweet as honey ?

A. Pleasant words.

Q. Who took a present of honey when they went to buy food ?

A. Joseph's brethren.

Q. To what are God's judgments compared ?

A. To honey and the honey-comb.

Q. Who ate a piece of broiled fish and honey-comb after His resurrection ?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. Name an insect sent as one of the plagues of Egypt, which ate up every green thing?

A. The locust.

Q. How large is the locust?

A. About the size of a man's thumb.

Q. Do locusts come in great numbers in Eastern countries?

A. Yes. Millions and millions at a time. Sometimes the whole air is darkened by them, and often they leave nothing upon the ground, so that a famine is produced.

Q. Who describes the calamity occasioned by locusts?

A. The prophet Joel.

Q. To what are locusts compared in the book of Revelation?

A. To fallen teachers.

Q. Who ate locusts and wild honey?

A. John the Baptist.

Q. What is a gnat?

A. A little winged insect, which is generally found near water.

Q. What did Jesus say of the Pharisees?

A. "Ye strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

Q. What did he mean?

A. That while they were particular about little things, they neglected great and important ones.

**Q.** To what insect did David once compare himself?

**A.** The flea.

**Q.** What can the flea do?

**A.** Leap a thousand times as high as itself.

**Q.** What is a maggot?

**A.** An insect in an imperfect state.

**Q.** Where do we read of maggots in the Bible?

**A.** In Ex. xvi. 20. In the manna which had been kept too long by the disobedient Israelites.

**Q.** Name an insect very destructive to green things, and which increases faster than the locust?

**A.** The caterpillar.

**Q.** Where is it said that God sent caterpillars as a punishment for sin?

**A.** Psalm lxxviii. 46; Psalm cv. 34, 35, etc.

**Q.** What beautiful insect is in its first state an ugly brown caterpillar?

**A.** The butterfly.

**Q.** Of what is the butterfly, bursting from its shell, a type?

**A.** Of the resurrection of God's people in a new and glorious body.

**Q.** What are the canker-worm and the palmer-worm?

**A.** Insects which feed upon grain.

**Q.** What prophet was commanded to threaten the people with these insects for the punishment of sin?

A. Joel.

Q. Of what use is the worm?

A. It makes the earth lighter and softer.

Q. Who speaks of man as a worm in God's sight?

A. Bildad, Job's friend.

Q. Who else calls himself a worm?

A. David. (Psalm xxii. 16.)

Q. Name a little winged buzzing insect, sent as a plague on Pharaoh?

A. The fly.

Q. To whom else did God threaten to send them?

A. The Israelites; by Isaiah (vii. 18).

Q. Name other insects sent as a plague?

A. Lice.

Q. What did the magicians of Egypt say of the plague of lice?

A. "It is the finger of God."

Q. Name an insect which God said He would send before His people to destroy the wicked nations of Canaan?

A. The hornet.

Q. What insect spins a web to catch its prey?

A. The spider.

Q. By what does the spider teach people a useful lesson?

A. By its perseverance.



Q. Who spoke of the spider's web?

A. Job.

Q. Who says spiders are in kings' palaces?

A. Agur. (Prov. xxx. 28.)

Q. What insect has a sharp point in its body, which it can throw out at pleasure, and with which it bores holes in the ground to place its eggs in?

A. The grasshopper.

Q. What nations were compared with grasshoppers for multitude?

A. The Midianites, in Gideon's time.

Q. Who says that man may become so feeble that even the grasshopper shall be a burden?

A. Solomon.

Q. Name an insect something like a butterfly, which however prefers darkness to light and sunshine?

A. The moth.

Q. What do some moths do with clothes?

A. They eat them.

Q. What does Jesus say about moths?

A. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

## REPTILES OF THE BIBLE.

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WHAT is a reptile? I wonder whether any of you could tell me. I dare say you do not exactly know what is the difference between birds, beasts, and reptiles. I cannot now tell you much about these creatures, because it would lead me to speak of many things which I should prefer you to read of during week days. Reptiles, however, I must tell you are animals,—though of less interest than either beasts or birds. They are not what are called mammalia,—that means, animals which feed their young with their own milk. Reptiles are cold-blooded creatures; they either crawl or swim; they have less instinct than beasts or birds, and are generally indolent, and in winter lie in a state of torpor, or sleepiness. Before the flood some reptiles were immensely large; some of them, of the lizard kind, were thirty feet long,—that would be, as long as a *large* room. The skeletons of many of these animals have been found buried under ground, deep down, where they have lain for ages and ages. The science which tells us about the fossil remains of these wonderful crea-

tures is called geology; and a most interesting one it is to study,—for we learn much about these creatures, which lived so long before the flood. Sometime, perhaps, you will know and understand it for yourselves.

All reptiles were regarded as unclean, under the Law God gave to Moses. You will find this Law in Leviticus xi. 31, 40—43.

Reptiles, as well as birds and beasts, were created for God's glory. (Gen. i. 24, 25.) And in Psalm cxlviii., reptiles are also included with the other animals which are created for God's praise. Adam had them put under his dominion. (Gen. i. 26.) Yet how sad to think, dear children, that through means of a *reptile* our first parents sinned! I think, perhaps, this was the reason why all reptiles from henceforth were to be regarded by God's people as unclean and unholy. No image was to be made in the likeness of a reptile, or indeed of any other creature. (See Deut. iv. 16—18.) Yet even the Israelites were found guilty of worshipping these creatures (Ezek. viii. 10); and Gentiles also (see Rom. i. 23). Solomon wrote a history of reptiles, as well as birds and beasts; and many curious and interesting things are told about them in natural history. I must now begin to tell you about the reptiles mentioned in the Bible.

## Reptiles.

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### THE CHAMELEON.

WHAT is called the mole in the Bible is supposed to be the chameleon. It is never mentioned there, I believe, except amongst the list of unclean creatures. (Lev. xi. 30.) The chameleon is a kind of lizard.\* One of the most curious things about it is, that according to the different shades of light in which it is seen, and whether it is angry or hungry, so it seems to change colour,—sometimes having a sort of leaden ashy hue, at other times red or brown. It is a stupid, slow creature ; harmless, and feeding on insects, which its large tongue enables it quickly to draw into its mouth. .

### THE LIZARD.

LIZARDS are of many kinds ; but the one which is spoken of in the Bible is thought to be of a most poisonous nature, delighting to wallow in dirt and mire, and is loathsome as well as dangerous. It is only named in the list of unclean reptiles. (Lev. xi. 30.)

## THE TORTOISE.

TORTOISES, like lizards, are of many kinds ; but one of the principal things to notice about them is the hard shell which covers their back. They are slow, harmless creatures, very awkward in their movements, and feed on vegetable substances. They live very long, sometimes even one hundred years. Though the Jews were forbidden to eat them, they are considered very good for food, particularly that kind called the turtle, or sea tortoise. There are many in Palestine, which would serve to remind the Jews, as they watched them slowly crawling along, that they were unclean ; and still further, make them think of the first sin of Adam and Eve, who were tempted to eat the forbidden fruit by a reptile which crawled on the ground, even though it was not exactly like the tortoise.

## THE SNAIL.

A SNAIL is a curious little creature, which has its home in a shell, which it carries on its back as it crawls along. What are called slugs are of the same kind, though they have no shells. They are very destructive to early spring vegetables and flowers ; and wherever they pass, they leave a slimy mark. Dear children, is not this like sin ? Whenever it is indulged in, it is sure to leave a *mark*,—a mark which nothing

but the blood of Jesus can wash away. You have many marks to wash out,—many sins to be cleansed away; pray to have them removed, for Jesus' sake.

Snails easily melt with heat or pressure. David mentions this, in Psalm lvi. 8. He speaks of God's judgment on the wicked, and says,—"*As a snail which melteth*; let every one of them pass away."

#### THE FROG.

THE frog is a well known reptile, of a greenish colour, with black spots; its under parts being of pale yellow. Its eyes are large for its size, and brilliant. It hops about with great activity, and is very fond of being near, or even in, shallow water. One difference between a toad and a frog is, that the frog leaps, and the toad crawls, and the frog is much more active than the toad. There are several different kinds of frogs; and in France many varieties are considered tender and delicate for food. There is one remarkable thing mentioned in the Bible about frogs. When Pharaoh, king of Egypt, refused to let God's people go, I dare say you will remember that God sent ten plagues upon him. The second plague was that of immense numbers of frogs:—"And the Lord spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him,

Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs : and the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading troughs : and the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants." (Exodus viii. 1—4.) Pharaoh was not made afraid by this threatened punishment, and so the frogs were sent. But soon the wicked king found how dreadful was this plague. Think how horrible, to find a cold, clammy frog in your bed or on your seat! Though harmless, the frog is disagreeable both to look at and touch. Soon Pharaoh prayed that Moses and Aarón would ask the Lord to remove these unpleasant creatures. They did so ; and God heard their request, and the frogs died. Then the wicked king hardened his heart, and would not let the people go. Oh ! how sad thus to rebel against the Almighty. But there are many people who, when in trouble, say they will do better ; yet if God removes the trouble from them they become worse than ever. This is sadder than if they were heathen, and knew not God ; for the more knowledge we have, the greater will be our

shame and punishment if we refuse to obey God's commands.

We read of the frog again in the last book of the Bible. (See Rev. xvi. 13.) "And I saw three unclean spirits, *like frogs*, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

Now I cannot, dear children, tell you the meaning of these three frogs, or evil spirits,—for, in the prophetic parts of God's Word, much is left to our faith, that cannot now be made clear. I do not think that God meant His purposes to be fully known, although some people say one thing and some another, according to their own ideas. We do know that in the latter times many will depart from the faith of the Bible, and listen to foolish stories and pretended miracles and wonders; and that in these days the corrupt Church of Rome draws over many weak minds, and persuades them to embrace her doctrines; and also there are other grievous errors entered into the Church, whereby many are led astray: but whatever these errors or evils may be, I want *you* to believe that God



will keep you from them, if you trust in Him with your whole heart.

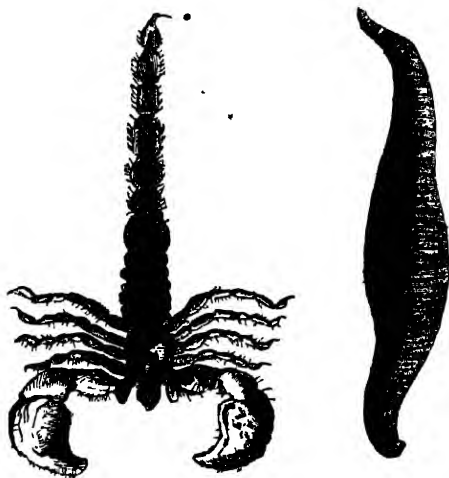
The Bible has said that troubles and persecutions are to come upon the Church; yet God knows them that are His, and will keep their souls safe; and if they are looking for and watching for the coming of their Lord, He will comfort and succour them in the time of trial and sorrow here on earth, and at last take them to dwell with Him in His glorious kingdom for evermore.

### THE HORSE-LEECH.

LEECHES are a kind of worm, fond of sucking blood, which they will draw until they are unable to take any more. They are useful for some kinds of illness, which require that people should have blood taken from them: leeches are then applied, which fasten into the flesh and draw the blood away. They are unpleasant-looking creatures, and all we connect them with is disagreeable. The horse-leech is a particular kind of leech, found in shallow or stagnant water. It is mentioned once in the book of Proverbs: "The horse-leech hath two daughters, crying Give, give." This, I suppose, refers to the never satisfied desire for blood which these creatures possess.

## THE SCORPION.

SCORPIONS are disagreeable creatures ; something between lizards and enormous spiders. They look more like lobsters, than anything I can describe to you. They have most dreadful stings, which are in their tails. These are spoken of in the book of Revelation : "They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails, and their power was to hurt men five months." (Rev. ix. 9.) The scorpions which sting the most venomously are about five or six inches



Scorpion and Horse-leech.

long. They live principally in hot countries, and are very great plagues. There are numbers in Palestine during summer. They are generally found under stones, or among ruins, but at times they even enter houses.

In the wilderness through which Moses led the Children of Israel, there were many of these unpleasant creatures. God spoke to the Israelites, and reminded them of His goodness in protecting them from their stings: "Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that He might humble thee, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end." (Deut. viii 15, 16.)

When Jesus was talking to His disciples about God's goodness, and what wise and kind arrangements He made for His people, he compared Him with a father who knows what is proper and right to give his children. He said,— "If a son ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? or if he ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then being evil (or sinful), know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your

heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke xi. 11—13.) Oh, yes! dear children, God is more ready and willing than even your own kind father, to give you rich blessings. You have only to ask, and receive from God. When Jesus sent out seventy of His disciples to preach the Gospel, they returned to Him with great joy, finding even the devils obeyed them; and then He said,—“Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” (Luke x. 19.)

Scorpions are always emblems of what is wicked: thus the rebellious Jews, in Ezekiel's time, were compared with them. God said to His servant,—“And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions,” etc. (Ezek. ii. 6.) And in Revelation (chap. v. 3, 5, 10), wicked people, opposed to Jesus Christ, are said to be like these creatures, whose bite causes death.

Scorpions, therefore, have always been considered great plagues in any country. Do you remember the foolish young king Rehobqam, Solomon's son, who, when his people asked him not to be quite so strict as his father had been, could not listen to the good advice of the old

men who wished him to grant their petition, but took that of silly young men; and when the people came for their answer, made this unwise reply: "Whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." (1 Kings xii. 11.) Perhaps you know the consequences of this harsh answer? Ten of the tribes of Israel directly rebelled against Rehoboam; and from that time there was no more one king over the whole land of Israel, for it was divided into two kingdoms. How foolishly this young king must have felt he had acted, when it was too late to change his mind.

Remember, that old people, who have lived the longest and had the most experience, can *generally* give better advice than those who have had less time to acquire wisdom. Had Rehoboam only listened to what the *old* men advised, his kingdom would have been left undisturbed; as it was, you see, he lost by far the greater part of it.

#### THE VIPER OR ADDER AND ASP.

VIPERS, ADDERS, AND ASPES are reptiles of the snake kind. The two first are of the same species, though there are two or three distinctions. They are small, about two feet long, of a dull yellow

colour, spotted with black. They are often found in England, and all over Europe. Their bite is venomous, but does not, I believe, always cause death, though there are instances which have ended fatally. It was one of this deadly kind no doubt which was found on the island where St. Paul was wrecked. Do you remember, when the poor people who had been saved from drowning were cast on shore, the barbarous people were very kind to them, and as it was cold and wet, they made a fire, for which St. Paul himself "gathered a bundle of sticks, and as he laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand," they thought St. Paul must be a very wicked man, who, though he had perhaps escaped the sea, God was going to punish for his sins. But St. Paul shook it off his hand into the fire, and felt no hurt. The people watched for some time, and thought his hand would swell, or he would fall down dead; but God would not let the viper hurt his servant. When they saw no harm was done, they now began to think that he was a god instead of a wicked man.

When John the Baptist was baptizing in the river Jordan, and the Pharisees and Sadducees came to be baptized, he said unto them: "Oh, generation of vipers, who hath warned you to

flee from the wrath to come?" These people had a poison within them far worse even than that of vipers. It was the poison of sin, unrepented of and unforgiven.

There are many people who pretend to, and in some cases really have obtained such a power over serpents and snakes, that they make them perfectly harmless. They twist them over their necks, and handle them in every way without the snakes biting them. This is called "serpent charming." But all serpents will not be charmed. It is said that adders have been known to take the tip of their tail and place it over their ears, so as to prevent themselves from listening to music or any pleasant noise. To this extraordinary obstinacy there are two allusions in the Bible. David says of the wicked: "They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." (Ps. lvi. 4, 5. See also Jer. viii. 17.) In that beautiful ninety-first Psalm, which speaks of God's gracious care, he says to his people,—“Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder;” which means that God will keep His saints in all dangers, if they put their trust in Him. Of the punishment which shall come on drunkards, Solomon says,—“at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.” (Prov. xxiii. 32.)

The asp is somewhat different from the viper or adder. Its bite is not painful, but it is certain death, unless the part bitten is immediately cut off. It is generally of a green colour, with brown bands over its skin. It is very small, I believe the smallest of all snakes. There was once a wicked heathen queen,—she was very proud, but some people thought her brave: she



Queen Cleopatra and the Asp.

would not have been afraid to have gone out to battle, and even herself to have fought. But there was one thing she had not courage to stand



against,—that was being conquered, and shown as a vanquished queen to her enemies. This was really being wanting in true courage, because to be really brave is always to face whatever we are called upon to endure, however much our pride may shrink from it. But queen Cleopatra preferred to die rather than be looked upon as a prisoner. When taken by her enemies she was carefully watched, to see that she did not stab herself, and knives and daggers kept from her. But she had a friend outside her prison, who promised to aid her in taking away her life. A basket of fruit or flowers was sent to her, concealed in which was an asp, whose deadly bite the queen knew would rid her from her earthly enemies. She pressed the deadly creature to her, and speedily death stole upon her; and she went to render her account to a far mightier Monarch than the Roman emperor she so much dreaded. Now there are some people, dear children, who would tell you that this queen's act was a brave one,—that they admired her spirit and courage. But believe me, for any one to take away the life which God has given, can never be a brave or a right action. When God pleases, he can at any moment take away our lives; therefore to shorten them ourselves is presumptuous and wicked in the highest degree. True courage is to bear with meekness

and patience, reviling, mocking, and persecution; out of which, in God's good time, He will deliver His people, who then will "know how sublime a thing it is, to suffer and be strong."

In Ps. cxl. 3, the words of the wicked are compared with the poison of asps; and again, in Romans iii. 13, of the wicked it is said, "the poison of asps is under their lips." In the time of peace and righteousness yet to come, the asp will cease to be venomous, "and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp." (Is. xi. 8.) This means that without danger of death, even a baby shall play beside the home of this serpent, now so deadly.

#### THE COCKATRICE OR BASILISK.

THE creature which is now called by these names, is not the same as that mentioned in the Bible. The cockatrice or basilisk, of the present time is a hooded lizard, which though ugly in appearance, is quite harmless. The cockatrice of the Bible was some kind of venomous serpent or lizard, very much dreaded by all persons. This is several times mentioned. In the time of peace, of which I have told you before, Isaiah says, "the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den." (Is. xi. 8.) Of the wicked people it was said,— "They hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave the

spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper." (Is. lix. 5.) This meant that the sins of the wicked were worse than the increase of these poisonous creatures. Cockatrices were sent by God sometimes as a plague upon the wicked. In Jeremiah we read,—“Behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the Lord.” (Jer. viii. 17.)

#### .THE DRAGON,

VERY often in the Bible, the creature called the dragon is a “figurative” animal; that is, not an animal which is really known and living, but one used to show something God wished to be known. The dragon of the present time is a harmless reptile of the lizard kind,—about four feet in the length of its body, with a long thin tail. It is of a bluish grey colour. Perhaps you have heard many silly stories about dragons. When I was a little child, I was foolish enough to read of these monsters, with seven heads, and flames of fire coming out of their mouths,—all of which of course was untrue. I do not know what sort of an animal can be meant by the dragon in the Bible, when it is not spoken of figuratively;—most likely some creature of the serpent tribe. The wicked are compared with poisonous dragons:

“their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.” (Deut. xxxii. 33.)

The dragon of the Bible must have been a solitary creature, for Job complains that by his misfortunes he had become a brother to dragons. (Job xxx. 29.) It had a wailing voice, which Micah speaks of (chap. i. 8). Its snuffing up the wind, and devouring and swallowing its prey, is spoken of by Jeremiah (xiv. 6; li. 34). It was found in dry places,—as in the wilderness, and deserted cities: another kind was found in rivers, and these may have been the reptiles we now call crocodiles. I cannot tell you all the places where these things are mentioned it would take up too much time; but a few I can give you. In Psalm lxxiv. 13, we read thus of God’s power,—“Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou breakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.” (See also Isaiah xxvii. 1.) Again: “I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons” (Jeremiah ix. 11): and of the cities of God’s enemies,—“thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons,” etc. (Is. xxxiv. 13.) Of Babylon it is said by the same prophet,—“the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces.” (Is. xlii. 22; see also Is. xliii. 20.)

And of Esau's land, God says,—“I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.” (Mal. i. 3.)

The dragon described in one part of the Bible was red, but I do not think the colour is mentioned except where it was a figurative creature. (Rev. xii. 3.) It was often used as a representation of wicked people. In Ezek. xxix. 3,—“Thus saith the Lord God; Behold I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers,” etc. (See also Is. xxvii. 1; li. 9.) The Psalmist says,—“Thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.” In this case, the dragons meant wicked people; as also where God promises the saints shall trample the dragon under their feet. (Ps. xci. 13.) Several times in the Revelation the devil is called the dragon, also that old serpent; but as I am going to tell you about the serpent presently, I will only mention one example of this:—“There appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth,” etc. (Rev. xii. 3, 4.) “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and pre-

ailed not," etc. (Rev. xii. 7, 8.) The whole of the rest of this chapter is about this dragon,—that is the devil,—and how he tried to persecute the woman with her child. This woman means the Church, or those who love and fear God. The devil would have killed her, and devoured her child, but God would not suffer him to do so : though the devil has persecuted the followers of Christ all these years, yet God will never suffer him to prevail over them. No ! God is stronger than the dragon ; and thanks be to Him, He giveth victory to His people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. •

## THE SERPENT.

NEARLY 6000 years ago there lived, in a beautiful garden, a man and woman. In this garden there grew flowers, beautiful and gorgeous, smelling sweetly and scenting the air around. There were fruits and trees, too, of every kind ; all good for food,—no poison in them,—no thorns to wound ; no weeds grew in this lovely place,—no thistles. The birds sung sweetly in the trees, without fear of any enemy. Majestic lions uttered their mighty roar, but it was not the roaring after their prey—it was the voice of praise to God. The striped tiger sprang lightly on the ground, climbed the trees, or played with the beautiful spotted leopard. The timid deer feared

not their deadly spring ; neither did the gentle lamb hide itself when the wolf or hyena approached. There was no sickness, no pain, no sadness in that beautiful garden. Often together, no doubt, the happy man and woman strayed, to watch the birds and animals enjoying themselves. Together they sat under the trees,—perhaps sometimes with a magnificent lion near them, or a beautiful tiger at their feet ; they could pat them and caress them, as you would your little dog or cat : there was nothing to fear from them. Sometimes they might sit and watch the gigantic but harmless serpent gracefully coiling itself in the trees, or place one of the smaller kind even in their bosoms, while they admired its beautiful skin and coloured spots. When the sun was hot the trees sheltered them, and when the light of day faded away it brought no terror for them ;—gently they laid down to sleep, while bright angels beheld them from heaven with love and joy. Often a friend—kind, wise, and good—came and talked with them. He was higher than all the kings of the earth, yet they were not afraid. He smiled upon them, and in the light of His smile they knew no fear, for they loved Him with a perfect love. This Friend it was, to whom this lovely garden belonged. He had caused the flowers and trees to grow, and had formed and put all these living

creatures within it, and then He placed therein this happy pair. Oh! how they must have loved such a Friend! How happy they must have been, *knowing no sin, dreading no death*; always abiding under the shadow of God's love!

Can you believe they could ever have any wish or desire to do otherwise than please their gracious Friend? He had given them leave to eat freely of all the good fruits which grew in the garden, except one. Surely, surely they would never wish for that one fruit. But you know their sad story: listen to the end once more.

One day, alone Eve walked near this tree. Ought she to have done this? When we are forbidden to touch anything, is it not always wisest and best not to go near it, but keep out of the way of temptation? Near this tree was a serpent. Was Eve afraid of this serpent? We should run away if we saw a serpent now. But Eve knew every creature in Eden was harmless. She must have been surprised when the serpent spoke. She knew not the devil; she knew no sin; but she was curious, and listened. In that glittering serpent's body, the prince of wickedness was dwelling. The serpent is more subtle, deceitful, or sly, than any beast which the Lord God has made;—so Satan thought it the best form for him to take. He said unto the woman,



—"Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" He wanted first to make the woman think God unkind. Then she told him how they might eat of all the trees of the garden, save *one*; but if they ate of it, they should die. Did the woman know what death meant? Did she know what the cold dark grave was? Did she know what hell-fire meant? No, dear children, she did not; but she knew it was wrong to disobey God. *We* know what death is. Even little children have seen it and felt it too. There are many little graves in every churchyard, beneath which lie the bodies of little children, waiting till the trump of the archangel shall sound, when the graves shall open, and all will rise: some to join their Saviour in the air, others,—oh! how sad,—to join the devil and his angels!

But Eve knew nothing of this; and she still listened to the tempter, who said,—“Ye shall not surely die!” This was making God’s word untrue. But the devil is the father of lies. Then Eve turned her eyes to the tree; she saw that it looked good for food. Oh! dear children, there are many things that look good to the eyes, which are deadly poison. Then she thought it pleasant to look at,—that is, the fruit was beautiful. But the most lovely things are often the most dangerous,—the most wicked; but

Eve did not know this either. She thought the tree would make her wise. Then the next step: she took of the food,—ate some herself, and gave of it to her husband, and he did eat. What happened? Were they wiser? Yes! But in what? They knew that they were sinners: they knew what they had lost, and who had been their tempter. Now they were afraid of God; and when they heard His voice in the garden, they hid themselves. But God called to them and said,—“Where art thou?” That was a solemn question: well might they tremble. Then God pronounced their awful doom, and that of the serpent:—“And the Lord God said unto the serpent, because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shall thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Gen. iii.) You know, “the seed of the woman,” meant the Saviour, who bruised the serpent’s head by putting away the sting of death, by dying to save sinners.

After this, Adam and Eve were driven from that beautiful garden. From thenceforth, the flowers have soon faded,—the roses have thorns,—the trees have required much toil and care to

make them grow. The birds and beasts and reptiles have become the enemies of each other, and also of man. Quarrels, sickness, and sorrow, have become the lot of mankind, and for ~~that~~ <sup>sin</sup> the creatures too are doomed to suffer.

You, no doubt, know this old story that I have been telling you; but you cannot hear it too often. There is always something new, to be learnt from it. Something that ought to speak to your hearts, and make you more earnest in asking God, for Jesus Christ's sake, to "lead you not into temptation." Well may you all feel a loathing, a hatred, a shuddering come over you, when you see a serpent; for though the creature itself was not the tempter, we know that it was in a serpent's body the devil appeared to Eve; and that a serpent is crafty and sly beyond all other creatures. Can you ever forget, when you see the serpent, what happened thousands of years ago in that bright and lovely garden? No; no Christian can cease to remember it, and God's Word in this is true:—"I will put enmity (or hatred) between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed;" for though this applies to the righteous and the wicked, in one sense, it is also true with regard to the reptile itself. But what is true in this respect of real believers in Christ, is not true of the heathen. Is it not strange, that in all ages,—*even now*,—there are

*serpent worshippers?* It is great wickedness to worship any creature; but strange to choose one Christians loathe so much. Yet Babylon, Persia, Egypt, the Druids of Britain, have each in turn worshiped it. In parts of India and Japan there are people who still bow the knee to this creature,—while the poor Zoolus regard a little green serpent as the good spirit which preserves them from all evil; and they would kill any one, friend or foe, who presumed to harm their little gods.

To attempt to tell you about the different kinds of serpents, would be impossible; neither in this book should I wish it. The Bible says so much about them. I want to draw your attention to its lessons on the subject. I may, however, tell you that there are three hundred different kinds of serpents and snakes. They are different from other kinds of reptiles, because they have no feet whatever. Some persons think that serpents once had wings, and possibly feet. And no doubt there were flying serpents, for they are mentioned in the Bible. Isaiah says,—"The land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and old lion, the viper, and *fiery flying serpent*," etc. (Isa. xxx. 6.) And in Deut. viii. 15,—"*Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents.*" But no such creatures exist now. If serpents ever had feet, the idea is not impossible

that God deprived them of them when He pronounced the curse:—"On thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." Isaiah says,—“Dust shall be the serpent’s meat.” (Is. lxxv. 25.) Again,—“They shall lick the dust like a serpent.” (Micah vii. 17.) This a serpent does in dragging his prey along the ground; besides which his body crawls in the dust.

Job speaks thus of the serpent:—"By His (God’s) Spirit He hath garnished the heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked serpent." (Job xxvi. 13.) Isaiah calls it also a "crooked serpent." (See Isaiah xxvii. 1.) The serpent’s subtlety is a kind of wisdom: its very deceit makes it cautious. This is why Jesus commands His disciples to be "wise as serpents, but harmless as doves." (Matthew x. 16.) Some persons eat serpents; but they are unfit for food. (See Matthew vii. 10.) Serpents are found sometimes in hedges. Solomon refers to this:—"He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it, and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him." (Eccles. x. 8.) They were also found in holes of walls. Amos, speaking of the suddenness and terror of the judgment-day to the wicked, says,—“As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.”

(Amos v. 19.) The apostle James speaks of the taming of serpents, as well as beasts and birds (see James iii. 7); and of serpent charming, I have told you a little while ago.

The plague of serpents was often sent as a punishment. God threatens transgressors with them, by the mouth of Moses, for disobedience: "I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust." (Deut. xxxii. 23, 24. See also 1 Cor. x. 9.) And again:—"Rejoice not thou, whole Palestine, because the rod of Him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice (or adder), and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent." (Isa. xiv. 29.)

I must now tell you of the miracles connected with the serpent. When God sent Moses to Pharaoh to command him to let Israel go, He told him to cast his rod upon the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses fled from it; but God told him to take it by the tail, and it was turned into a rod again. (Exodus iv. 3, 4.) And when Moses came into Pharaoh's presence he performed this miracle.

When the children of Israel were journeying

in the wilderness, as you know they often did, they murmured, because their road was difficult, and because they grew tired of manna to eat:—“And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit them; and much people of Israel died.” (Numb. xxi. 6.) Under this severe punishment the people came to Moses, and confessed that they had sinned, and asked him to pray for them to God, that the serpents might be taken away. God is always more ready to forgive than men are to seek forgiveness; for He is “gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great goodness.” God could at once have taken away these serpents, if He had pleased; but He wanted to teach the Israelites a lesson of faith and obedience; so He ordered Moses to make a serpent of brass, like the fiery serpent, and to put it on a pole. Then, when the children of Israel were bitten, if they raised their dying eyes, and looked at the brazen serpent, they were healed immediately. Do you think any of the Israelites would refuse to look up and be made well? Oh, no! I think they would indeed be thankful for so easy a deliverance.

Now, dear children, I want you to learn a lesson from this. If you will look in the third chapter of St. John’s Gospel, the 14th and 15th verses, you will hear what Jesus says:—“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,

even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." The brazen serpent then was a type of Jesus Christ, even as the fiery serpents were of the devil. We have all been bitten by sin, and tempted by the devil. Nothing can heal this deadly bite of sin, but "looking unto Jesus." Jesus, when He was crucified on the cross for us miserable sinners, was "lifted up" as the serpent was. Now He is lifted up still higher: He is in heaven above. How are we to look to Him? We cannot use our natural eyes, as the Israelites did towards the brazen serpent: but the Bible speaks of the "eyes of our understanding." Our thoughts, our wishes, our hopes, our desires must be lifted up to Jesus. He only can cure sin;—His blood shed upon the cross will heal it. We have only to look by faith to Him, and be saved. What is faith? It is to believe exactly what God tells us. He has said, "Believe only." Then what you are to do, my dear little friends, is simply to feel in your hearts that Jesus is both able and willing to save you, if you look to Him. Lose no time in doing so, lest the bite of sin get deeper and deeper, until in the end you die from its venom.

The country where the Israelites were bitten still abounds in stinging serpents, which are



much dreaded by travellers. The brazen serpent which Moses made was preserved by the Israelites; and I am very sorry to tell you that many years after, this brazen serpent was worshiped by the people, who burnt incense to it. This was extremely wicked, and disobedient to God's Second Commandment. At length there arose a good and great king, called Hezekiah, who destroyed all the idols of his people; and, in 2 Kings xviii. 4, you may read;—"He removed the high places, and break the images, and cut down *the groves, and break in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made*; for unto those days the Children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan"—which means, a piece of brass. By this the good king meant to assure them that this serpent had nothing in it of the nature of a god, for it was only a piece of brass.

This destruction of the brazen serpent is plain enough, is it not? But do you know that many of the people called Roman Catholics, or Papists, do not believe that Hezekiah destroyed it. Some years ago I was travelling in Italy, when I went to see a curious old church, called the church of St. Ambrose. Fastened up against one of the pillars, was a black-looking figure of a serpent: the guide assured me that it was the very brazen serpent which Moses made. Is it not sad

to see and hear how ignorant some people are of what the Bible says?

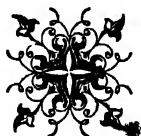
There have long been dark days in Italy: days when the priests blinded the eyes of the people, and kept from them the pure light of God's Word, and made them believe fables or tradition,—which are stories or accounts never inspired by the Holy Ghost, but repeated as true from generation to generation. Jesus Christ's words to the Pharisees may apply to these people: "Ye make void the Word of God through your tradition;" for many instances there are, where what the Bible says is unheeded, and tradition only received. But brighter days have come to poor long-darkened Italy! That noble soldier, Garibaldi, has opened the way for liberty of conscience; and Victor Emmanuel, though outwardly a Romish king, does not refuse the Bible to his people. Soon, therefore, we may look for a blaze of Protestant light,—the fall of the Popedom,—and then shall Italy rise to be the glory of kingdoms!

But we must now finish about the serpent. There are a few things with which it is compared in the Bible. In Jacob's blessing to his son Dan, he says thus: "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a *serpent by the way*, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall

backward." (Gen. xlix. 16, 17.) This meant that Dan should be dangerous as an enemy; that he should steal quietly and deceitfully where his foe could not see him, and so bite him suddenly and make him fall backwards. If you have ever read of the deceitful manner in which the tribe of Dan came upon the poor people of Laish, as they dwelt securely and had no fear of harm,—how the Danites fell upon them and killed them, and obtained their city, which they named Dan,—you will better understand why Dan was compared with the subtle serpent.

Jesus compares hypocrites, or deceitful persons, with these creatures (see Matt. xxiii. 33); and St. Paul compares the devil with the serpent. (See 2 Cor. xi. 3). I have already told you of one place in Revelation where Satan is called the serpent, in speaking of the dragon; now let me tell you of one more, that St. John saw in his vision of what was to come to pass: "An angel came down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." (Rev. xx. 1—3.)

May you all, dear ones, for ever cease to let that old serpent, the devil, rule over you, and now take Jesus for your Lord; so that finally you may have part in that first resurrection, among the blessed and holy people, upon whom the second death hath no power. •



## QUESTIONS ON REPTILES.

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Q. What are reptiles ?

A. Cold blooded creatures, which either crawl or swim. They have less instinct than birds or beasts ; and are generally torpid throughout winter.

Q. Were reptiles clean or unclean to the Jews ?

A. Unclean.

Q. What sort of animal is the chameleon ?

A. A sort of lizard, capable of changing colour.

Q. What sort of creature is the lizard, mentioned in the Bible ?

A. A loathsome and venomous creature.

Q. What reptile has a hard shell on its back ?

A. The tortoise.

Q. Does it live to a great age ?

A. Sometimes to one hundred years.

Q. What small reptile lives in a shell, which it carries at times on its back ?

A. The snail.

Q. What does David say about the melting of snails ?

A. That as quickly as the snail melteth, so shall the wicked fade away.

Q. Name one difference between a toad and a frog?

A. A frog leaps: a toad crawls.

Q. Upon whom was a plague of frogs sent?

A. Upon Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

Q. Who speaks of frogs in the New Testament?

A. St. John. (Rev. xvi. 13.)

Q. To what are they compared?

A. The spirits of devils.

Q. Of what are leeches very fond?

A. Blood.

Q. Where are leeches spoken of?

A. In the book of Proverbs.

Q. Are scorpions venomous?

A. Yes.

Q. Where are their stings?

A. In their tails.

Q. Were there many in the wilderness?

A. Yes. But God would not permit them to hurt His people.

Q. Who taught a lesson from scorpions?

A. Jesus Christ. (Luke xi. 11—13.)

Q. To whom did He give power to tread on scorpions?

A. His disciples.

Q. To what are scorpions always compared in the Bible?

A. To wicked people.

Q. Who threatened to chastise his people with scorpions?

A. Rehoboam.

Q. What was the consequence?

A. Ten tribes revolted from him.

Q. On whose hand did a viper fasten?

A. St. Paul's.

Q. Did it hurt him?

A. No: he shook it off, and felt no hurt.

Q. Who called the Pharisees a generation of vipers?

A. John the Baptist.

Q. Where is there a beautiful promise to the people of God, that they shall tread on the lion and adder, etc.?

A. In Psalm ninety-one.

Q. Whose words are compared to the poison of asps?

A. Those of the wicked.

Q. Shall the asp ever cease to be venomous?

A. Yes. A time shall come when "the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp." (Isaiah xi. 8.)

Q. Is what is called the cockatrice, or basilisk now, the same as that alluded to in the Bible?

A. No. That of the Bible was very venomous. That now so called is a harmless hooded lizard.

**Q.** Were cockatrices ever sent by God as a punishment?

**A.** Yes. (See Jer. viii. 17.)

**Q.** What is the creature now called the dragon?

**A.** A harmless reptile of the lizard kind.

**Q.** What was the dragon of the Bible?

**A.** Some think, the crocodile; but it was often a figurative animal.

**Q.** Who is called the dragon, by St. John?

**A.** The devil.

**Q.** How many years have passed away since Adam and Eve sinned?

**A.** Nearly six thousand.

**Q.** What reptile deceived Eve?

**A.** The devil, in the form of a serpent.

**Q.** Is much said of serpents in the Bible?

**A.** A great deal.

**Q.** How many different kinds of serpents are there?

**A.** Three hundred.

**Q.** Were there ever fiery, flying serpents?

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** Who speaks of them?

**A.** Moses. Also Isaiah.

**Q.** Are serpents ever eaten?

**A.** Yes: by some heathen nations.

**Q.** Whose rod was turned into a serpent?

**A.** Moses'.



Q. Who were bitten by fiery serpents for their sins?

A. The Israelites.

Q. How were they cured?

A. By looking at a brazen serpent on a pole.

Q. Of what was this a type?

A. Jesus lifted up on the cross.

Q. What became of the brazen serpent?

A. Hezekiah destroyed it, because the Israelites worshiped it.

Q. Are there any nations yet who worship serpents?

A. Yes; several.

Q. What tribe was compared to an adder and a serpent?

A. The tribe of Dan.

Q. Who is called the old serpent?

A. The devil.

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END OF REPTILES.

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## FISHES OF THE BIBLE.

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THERE is a great deal said of fishes in the Bible, although but two particular kinds are mentioned. Fish live entirely in the water, and would speedily die if taken to land. Some live in the salt sea, some in fresh-water lakes and rivers. They are not endowed with the same quickness and instinct as animals, though God has given them some knowledge to take care of and protect themselves from their enemies. They can also hear, see, and smell,—though the first of these but very slightly. Some kinds of fish build nests in the water, in which they place their eggs, almost as birds would do in theirs ; and when the young come forth, they are extremely kind and tender to them.

Of Solomon it is thus said : “ He spake three thousand proverbs : and his songs were a thousand and five. He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall : he spake also of

beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of *fishes*. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solómon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom." (1 Kings iv. 32—34.) Solomon's Proverbs, and some of his songs, still remain,—but his Natural History is lost, as I think I have told you before, when speaking of animals.

On the fifth day of creation God made fishes and flying fowls. (See Gen. i. 20.) He gave man dominion over them; and, after the flood, permitted him to have many kinds for food. There were some, however; which were to be considered unclean. All that had fins and scales were clean, but those which had not were unclean. A shark would be an unclean fish,—so would also such things as crocodiles, lizards, etc. Of these the Jews were commanded not to eat, for God's people were to live by the rule that He had given them.

Fishes, as well as other creatures, in their own way show forth God's glory: "Speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this"—says Job. "Let the heaven and the earth praise Him, the seas, and everything that moveth therein"—says the Psalmist.

Fish has always been an article of food among

all nations. The Nile of Egypt abounded with fish, and therefore the first plague of Egypt was sent upon the river. And when the waters were turned into blood, we read,—“The fish that was in the river died.” This must have been a great loss, as it was so much used. The Israelites, in their murmurings for food in the wilderness, said to Moses,—“We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely.” (Numb. xi. 5.)

The people of Tyre brought fish to sell at Jerusalem, in the time of Nehemiah, who says,—“There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish and all manner of ware, and sold on the Sabbath unto all the Children of Judah and in Jerusalem.” (Nehem. xiii. 16.) This was very wrong, as it was breaking the Fourth Commandment. There was a gate into Jerusalem called the fish-gate, because there fish was sold. This is alluded to in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 14, and also in Zeph. i. 10: “And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish-gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills.” This refers to God’s punishments on Judah for their sins.

In the Second Commandment God expressly forbids that the likeness of any fish should be made. The Philistines worshiped a fish-god, called Dagon,—supposed to be half a fish and

half a man. In the temple of Dagon they put the ark of God, when they took it in battle. In the morning when they went into the temple, they found their fish-god had fallen with his face to the earth, before the ark. God would not permit anything so holy to be put near an idol, without showing His greatness. After raising up Dagon, they set him in his place again; but, next morning, they found not only he had fallen, but his head and the palms of his hands were broken: "Only the stump of Dagon was left to him." Thus God had shown the Philistines His power, and that their fish-god could not stand at all before Him.

The two names of creatures living in the waters, mentioned in the Bible, are the whale and the leviathan. Both, however, are generally thought to mean the same creature, though they are spoken of separately. First I will tell you, in a few words, a little about the whale. It belongs to that class of creatures called mammalia,—or those which feed their young with their own milk; for, singular though it is, the whale can do this for her young ones. Of course you know that it is the largest inhabitant of the sea. It is often called a fish, but in reality it is not one: it is a kind of beast of the water,—not a fish at all. Whales, unlike fishes, have warm blood; neither can they live for a long

time in the water, but constantly require to come up to the surface to breathe the air.

They are enormous creatures: in some, the tail is not less than twenty-feet long. It must be a grand sight to see these huge creatures spouting up water, like a fountain, into the air, or lashing the sea into a foam with their huge tails. Whales, though so powerful, are not fierce creatures, like the sharks. They have not powerful teeth, and do not feed on flesh, as do the sharks. From their huge jaws is taken that useful article called whalebone; and from a certain kind of whale, called the sperm-whale, a valuable oily substance is procured, called spermaceti, which is much used for healing ointment. Their blubber, or fat, is of great value, as it is made into oil; and it is for this oil the whale is so much sought. One whale's body will often yield as much as twenty tons of pure oil.

Whale-fishing is a very dangerous employment. Many hardships the poor mariners have to undergo. Sometimes the whale will upset their boats, and plunge the unfortunate men into the water. Then, again, their vessels often get fastened in between huge icebergs,—those frozen mountains, so large and dangerous. Sometimes for years they are thus enclosed,—and if they have not provisions to last for a long time, they

are starved to death. Many brave men have thus lost their lives ; we hope, however, that as they have had time to think of what was before them, they died trusting in Jesus Christ.

There are many different kinds of whales, of which it is interesting to read, and I hope you will do so when you have an opportunity. I should think you have all heard of Jonah,—how



Jonah cast into the sea.

he was swallowed by a whale. Some people say it was a shark, or another kind of fish ; but Jesus mentions it as a whale. (See Matt. xii. 40.)

There are no whales now in the Mediterranean Sea.; it was there Jonah was sailing when swallowed by the fish; they have probably been driven away by the many ships which sail on that sea. But in Jonah's time few ships were used. Jonah was a type of Jesus: he was three days and three nights in the body of the whale, before he returned to the earth: so was Jesus three days and nights laid in the grave before He rose again to life. Whales are not often mentioned by name in the Bible, though of leviathan, which is generally believed to mean the whale, a good deal is said. At the creation, they are mentioned by name. "God created great whales," is what is told us. (See Gen. i. 21.) To show God's power, the psalmist speaks thus:—"Thou breakest the heads of leviathan in pieces." (Ps. lxxiv. 14.) And again,—“O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom has thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships: and there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.” (Psa. civ. 24—26.) ● Sometimes leviathan is spoken of in a figurative manner, compared with a wicked persecuting king, thus:—"In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing ser-



pent, even leviathan that crooked serpent," etc. (Is. xxvii. 1.)

The whole of the forty-first chapter of Job is about the leviathan ; and very grand is the description of him. You must read it : and remember that it was God Himself who spoke thus to Job. One or two verses I will tell you :—"He (leviathan) maketh the deep to boil like a pot : he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him ; one would think the deep to be hoary. Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things : he is king over all the children of pride." (Job xli. 31—34.)

But now to return again to fishes : for much is told us in the Bible about them. The manner of catching them is often spoken of. They were caught, sometimes in nets, as we read in the Gospels. By hooks also. (See Amos iv. 2.) When Jesus was asked to pay a tax for Himself and His disciples, He said to Peter,—“Go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up ; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money : that take, and give unto them for me and thee.” (Matt. xvii. 27.) You see Jesus was careful to obey in all things the laws of the land. There is a silly story told by some people, that the fish Peter caught was a haddock, and that the

mark of his thumb was made on the body of the fish where he held it, and that ever since all haddocks retain this mark. It is true there is a mark on these fishes as if made by a man's thumb; but we have no good ground for believing this to be the reason of it. Fishes were also caught by spears. This is spoken of in Job xli. 7. Fishes, as well as birds and beasts, were made to suffer when man had sinned; they did so when the waters of Egypt were turned into blood. And Ezekiel says, by God's command,—"Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel, so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground." (Ez. xxxviii. 19, 20.) Fishes are often spoken of as emblems of, or things like, other things in the Bible. Of the Egyptians and their king Pharaoh, God says,—“But I will put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales, and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales. And I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy

“rivers,” etc. (Ezekiel xxix. 4, 5.) The fish here means the people of Egypt, whom God was going to punish. They were so proud of their river Nile, they are spoken of as fish of its waters : for they would almost have been as badly off without the Nile, as the very fish themselves. In another place, people who do not know what is going to happen to them, are spoken of thus, —“ Man also knoweth not his time : as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare ; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.” (Eccles. ix. 12.) This means death, for one thing, which may come as unexpectedly as fishes are caught in a net. How needful, then, is it to be ready for death, that we may not be found unprepared when it arrives.

The prophet Habakkuk compares those who are ensnared, or caught, by the wicked, with fishes which have no ruler. (See Habak. i. 14.) Jesus Christ compares the kingdom of heaven, or the visible or outward professing Christians, with a net full of fishes. “The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind : which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of

the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew xiii. 47—50.)

This is a very simple parable, dear children, but it is one that ought to make us think. There are many people who go to church,—who even take the Holy Communion,—and appear outwardly very religious, who, when the last day comes, will be gathered from the good, and cast into the lake of fire. God only knows who are really His, and who are not. He looks at the hearts of people,—not at their outward manner or conversation. It is very sad to think how many who have joined in the services of God's house, will be found among the lost at the day of judgment.

In our Prayer Book we have these words,—"More especially, we pray for the good estate of the Catholic Church; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all *who profess and call themselves Christians, may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.*" What a church is the Church of England! and how beautifully does she remember to pray for all men, whether true believers or otherwise.

There were several miracles connected with fishes. Twice Jesus fed a multitude with a few loaves and fishes. The first time there were five loaves and two fishes: He blessed them, and brake, and gave to His disciples. These loaves and fishes fed no less than five thousand men, *besides* women and children. After the supper was over, the crumbs were gathered up, —twelve baskets full. You see Jesus would not allow waste; not even of crumbs. A lesson may be learnt here, dear children:—however rich, however many things you may have, there is no excuse for waste. How often I have been shocked to see children, and grown-up people too, leave on their plates after a meal, meat, or vegetables, which would have helped to make a nourishing cup of soup for some poor starving child. And sometimes bread has been thrown by the wayside in large pieces, because just then they who had received it did not feel hungry. “Waste not, want not,” is an old proverb; but depend upon it many who have wasted food, have known what it was to want food in after years. A second time Jesus fed a large multitude. In this miracle there were seven loaves and a few little fishes, and again the fragments, —seven baskets full,—were gathered up. “Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet

that should come into the world." (John vi. 14.) None but God, or one sent from God, could have performed such a wonder. The Jews were looking for a Great Deliverer about that time, and many now felt that He had appeared. But Jesus had come to deliver them from their sins,—not from the Romans, as the Jews wished. Many people wanted to have made Jesus a king, and would have done so by force, but Jesus departed into a mountain alone. The next day, however, the people came again to Him. But Jesus knew their thoughts,—that they did not seek Him to hear His words, but because they thought He could give them food to eat, and He said to them,—“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you,” etc. (John vi. 27.) What is the food we eat? It only keeps our bodies alive; it does not make our souls live. But the spiritual food of God’s Word gives life and health to the soul. Then Jesus told them more of this Bread of Life which He could give them. But many of the people were offended by His words, and they left Him. Ah, sinful people! who cared for the food of their bodies only, and not for the Bread of Life; how will they stand before the Saviour in that day, when only those who have lived by this Bread of Life can enter

into that kingdom where there is no hunger, and no thirst? \* You will remember, I dare say, that some of the disciples of Jesus were fishermen: only poor ignorant men, who earned their living by catching fish in the Sea of Galilee. This is how they were chosen to be His followers:—"And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And He said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him. And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him." (Matthew iv. 18—22.)

This was a miracle,—a wonder indeed! Who would have thought that a Man, walking by the sea-shore, could have induced these poor men to leave everything to follow Him? Suppose some one were to come to you, when you were with your parents, and to say,—“Go with me. Leave all you love,—all you have in the world, and come and work with me!” Would you like to go? Would you not hesitate? I am sure you would. But Jesus put His Spirit in

these men's hearts, and they knew Him, and owned Him as their Master and God: they were willing to leave everything they had for His dear sake; their trade, their ship, even their father: "They *immediately* left all, and followed Him." They did not wait to say,—“Will it be safe?” “Shall we have to work very hard?” “Shall we suffer if we are your followers?” No, they do not seem even to have thought of this: they were willing to leave everything for Jesus, and to be and to suffer what He pleased. Was not theirs a true, beautiful, and living faith, —a faith which worked by love? How many of you could say from your hearts, that you are willing to give up everything for Jesus? Oh! pray for the faith of those who at once left all, and followed the Saviour. In choosing fishermen for His disciples, Jesus no doubt had many reasons. Fishermen are generally men of patience, perseverance, and endurance. Very often they must toil all night upon the water, and catch no fish, as Peter complained to Jesus he had done. Fishermen must be watchful and attentive: they must be careful in preparing their bait, and not allow the fish to see it, lest they should avoid it. Thus ministers of Christ require care in making religion pleasant to their people; for if they fail, men refuse to listen to them. We read in the Bible of two



wonderful draughts of fishes. One night, when after hard labour, Peter and his companions were washing their nets, Jesus entered into Simon's ship, and sat down to teach the people out of the ship. When he had left speaking, Jesus told him to go out into the sea, and again let down his net. Then Peter told Him how long they had toiled, and taken nothing; but he added,—“Nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.”

Did Peter think Jesus did not know his trouble? Is not every trial known to Him? Oh, yes! dear children; think how Jesus knows and watches your sorrow, when you have one, and let that thought comfort you. Peter's obedience was rewarded. “When they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and *filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.* When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” (Luke v. 6—9.) Why did he say this? Because he was ashamed of his unworthiness and want of faith, and of not at once knowing that when Jesus told him to let down the net, he was sure to be successful. He did not really wish Jesus to leave him, but in his

humility he felt that he was too sinful for Jesus to remain with him. After Jesus Christ had risen from the dead, He appeared several times to His disciples. On one of these occasions, we read that He asked them if they had any meat. But they had none. He told them to cast the net on the right side of the ship, and they should find. Then they were unable to draw it out, for the number of fishes they had caught. When they reached land another miracle was beheld. A fire of coals was made, and fish cooked, and bread. Jesus then invited them to dine. It was after this dinner that Jesus asked Peter, three times, if he loved Him, and told him to feed His sheep and lambs. He also made known by what death Peter should suffer: showing him that he should be crucified. Soon after this, He ascended up to heaven, in their presence: earnestly they gazed after Him, until a cloud received Him out of their sight. Oh, how they must have longed to follow Him into that cloud! How they must have desired to be evermore with Him in heaven! But the time had not yet arrived; and while they gazed, two bright and shining angels spoke to them, and said,—“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” (Acts i. 11.) Yes, dear

children, that time has yet to come when in His own glorious body, the Saviour shall appear to judge the quick and dead. Still like these men of Galilee, do God's people stand gazing with the eye of faith into heaven, looking for and hasting unto that glorious appearing, so that when He cometh they may be found watching.

After this vision of angels, the disciples returned to Jerusalem, and continued for some time in prayer and supplication to God; and after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, they began their great work. They became, as Jesus said they should, "fishers of men:" that is, they gave up their lives for the good of others, seeking to win the souls of men to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, and be saved through His blood. It was a glorious work, and mightily the Word of God was spread by them, and still it goes on. There are many "fishers of men" on the sea of life now: good ministers seeking for the lost ones, and leading them to Jesus. And still shall the glorious work proceed, until the Gospel net is full, and the Saviour and His angels come to separate the good from the bad,—the one to live for ever in the ocean of God's love; the other, alas! in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. Oh! may the glorious tidings of the Gospel spread from sea to sea, and from pole to pole; and may

all who call themselves Christians join in spreading this good news,—remembering that they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.

“ Waft, waft ye winds His story,  
And you ye waters roll,  
Till like a sea of glory,  
It spreads from pole to pole :  
Till o’er our ransomed nature,  
The Lamb for sinners slain,—  
Redeemer, King, Creator,—  
In bliss returns to reign.”



## QUESTIONS ON FISHES.

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Q. Is there much about fishes in the Bible?

A. Yes.

Q. Who spoke about fishes, birds, and beasts, in the Bible?

A. Solomon.

Q. What kind of fishes might the Jews eat?

A. All that had fins and scales.

Q. Name the first plague of Egypt?

A. Water turned into blood, and the fishes dying in consequence.

Q. Who sold fish in Jerusalem on the Sabbath day?

A. The people of Tyre.

Q. Who forbade them?

A. Nehemiah.

Q. What people worshiped a fish god?

A. The Philistines.

Q. What was their idol's name?

A. Dagon.

Q. What happened to Dagon, when near the ark of God?

A. He was destroyed.

Q. What two creatures belonging to the sea are named in the Bible?

A. The whale and the leviathan.

Q. Are they both supposed to mean the same?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the whale a fish?

A. No. It is a kind of beast of the water.

Q. How long is the tail of a whale sometimes?

A. Twenty feet.

Q. Who was swallowed by a whale?

A. Jonah.

Q. How long was he in the whale's body?

A. Three days and nights.

Q. Who describes Leviathan?

A. God Himself, when speaking to Job.

Q. Who, at Jesus' telling, caught a fish, and found a piece of money in its mouth?

A. Simon Peter.

Q. What was this money for?

A. To pay tax, or tribute.

Q. To what did Jesus once compare a net full of fishes?

A. The kingdom of heaven.

Q. Who are the good and bad fish mentioned in this parable?

A. Good and bad people.

Q. With what did Jesus twice feed great multitudes?

A. A few loaves and fishes.

Q. When they had eaten enough, what was gathered up?

A. Several baskets of crumbs.

Q. What should this teach us?

A. Not to waste anything.

Q. Which of Jesus' disciples were fishermen?

A. Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

Q. Did Jesus ever perform any other miracle connected with fishes?

A. He caused a wonderful number of fishes to be caught after the disciples had tried in vain all night.

Q. Of what did Jesus eat after His resurrection?

A. Broiled fish and an honey-comb.

## FLOWERS OF THE BIBLE.

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- “There is a lesson in each flower ;  
A story in each stream and bower.  
On every herb on which you tread  
Are written words which, rightly read,  
Will lead you from earth's fragrant sod,  
To hope—to holiness—to God.” \*

(*Children's Friend.*)

How kind God has been to give us flowers ; those sweet and lovely things, which delight our eyes and refresh our senses with their fragrance ! The Holy Land was once like a garden of flowers, and in many parts they still abound. Yet though there were so many varieties, two flowers only are mentioned by name in the Bible,—the rose and the lily. We know these flowers well, as they grow in England ; but they are not exactly the same flowers we have been accustomed to call by these names. Amid the flowers of Palestine, there are also many others you will know well. There are tulips, lilies of various kinds, poppies, hyacinths, daisies, daffodils, geraniums, and anemones. Then there is also a small white flower, called “the star of Bethlehem,”—



and a scarlet one, which bears the mournful name of "the Saviour's blood drops." There are many different kinds of roses: yellow, white, and one called "the damask rose," which first came from Damascus, a town in Syria, bordering on the Holy Land.

Flowers are described in the Bible as coming in the spring: "Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come." (Song of Solomon ii. 11, 12.) Solomon seems to have been very fond of flowers, for in his writings we constantly read of them. In the Tabernacle first, and afterwards in Solomon's Temple, we hear of flowers being carved as ornamental work: the golden candlesticks for the service of God had flowers of gold on them. (See Exodus xxv. 31—33. 2 Chron. iv. 21.) The brazen sea, too, which Solomon made, had round its brim flowers of lilies. (2 Chronicles iv. 5.) The wood-work of the Temple was adorned with "open flowers," carved in cedar; also all the walls about had many of the same, as well as palm trees and cherubim. (1 Kings vi.) Flowers were also used in idolatrous worship. We read of garlands brought for this purpose by the priests of Jupiter, who thought that Paul and Barnabas were their false gods come down to them. (Acts xiv. 13.)

Flowers are used as emblems of the shortness and uncertainty of life: for you know, dear children, beautiful as flowers are, they are so delicate and tender that when the cold blasts come, they soon droop and fade and die. Some flowers only last a few days, and we see their leaves withering and dying away. Job says,—“Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down.” (Job xiv. 1, 2.) David says,—“As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.” (Psa. ciii. 15, 16.) And again a voice said to Isaiah (the voice of God’s Spirit it was),—“Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.” (Isa. xl. 6—8.)

Yes, dear children, kingdoms and nations shall pass away, but God’s Word never shall. Oh! that His Word may ever be your stay, and my stay, in joy or in sorrow! St. Peter writes a text almost like the one you have just read; and St. James says of the rich man,—“As the flower

of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth. So also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." (James i. 10, 11.) Even riches, you see,—those treasures which men value so much, have no power to preserve their possessors. Oh, then, seek first the riches of heaven, which can never fade away!

The whole nation of Israel, in their sins, are compared with a fading flower. (Isaiah xxviii. 1.) Of Jesus it is said,—“His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; His lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh.” (Song of Sol. v. 15.)

Then, in speaking of the rose, we must not forget that sweet verse, where the Saviour says of Himself,—“I am the Rose of Sharon.” (Song of Solomon ii. 1.) Sharon means a plain, or level piece of ground. The Plain of Sharon was once famous for its rich pastures for flocks and herds, but Isaiah the prophet was commanded to write,—“Sharon is like a wilderness.” (Isa. xxxiii. 9.) His words have come true,—for Sharon is now like a desert. Sand has blown over it and made it barren, and no flocks are there now; yet in many places upon it flowers still grow. There are wild roses blossoming among thorns,

reminding us of the "Rose of Sharon," dwelling among the wicked of the earth. Some people think the true rose of Sharon was a beautiful double flower, called the malva, and not a real rose.

But it matters not; it was beautiful and lovely, even if small and insignificant to look at: for the nearer we examine the tiniest flower, the more we see of the wonderful wisdom of our great God, in shaping with such skill their tiny forms, with which Jesus even has compared Himself. There is a time yet to come, when "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." (Isa. xxxv. 1, 2.) If you have ever seen a wild moor without bloom and beauty, you will better understand how great will be the change, when the desert shall blossom and have sweet flowers upon it.

But this is no greater change than God works, by His Spirit, in man's heart; when from a wild barren desert of sin, He changes it into "the garden of the Lord." The flowers represent the good works which, when a man's heart is really

given to God, must spring up and blossom abundantly. For no one can really love Him, who does not desire to perform works of faith and love, in gratitude for God's unspeakable gift.

### THE LILY.

THERE is the lily, and the lily of the valley, spoken of in the Bible, but neither are thought to be like our sweet, modest little flower. There are many plants called lilies, which grow abundantly: some are lilac in colour, and like a hyacinth; others of a rich scarlet, like velvet. These grow chiefly in the valleys, and about Nazareth, where Jesus lived so many years of His life.

Sometimes lilies grow among thorns. Jesus says of His people,—“As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.” (Song of Sol. i. 2.) And of Jesus it is said,—“My beloved is mine, and I am His: He feedeth among the lilies.” (Song of Solomon i. 16.) Many travellers still see the pretty, graceful gazelles, feeding among the lilies in Palestine. Where they abound it is a sure sign of a rich pasture: and is it not a rich pasture which Jesus gives to His people? He says His love is among thorns, in one place. Thorns, or troubles,—which is what they mean here,—are in every one's life. So long as they are in this world of sin and suffering, they must

look for sorrow ; but they that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved. Do you know those beautiful lines, which speak to all hearts ?

“ There are briars besetting every path,  
That call for patient care :  
There is a cross in every lot,  
And an earnest need for prayer :  
But the lowly heart, that leans on Thee,  
Is happy everywhere.”—*A. L. Waring.*

Again do the faithful people of Jesus speak of Him as among the lilies : “ My Beloved is gone down into His garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the garden, and to gather lilies. I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine : He feedeth among the lilies.” (Song of Sol. vi. 2, 3.) Is Jesus your Beloved ? Do you love Him dearer than all beside : better than your play, or your pleasures ; better than your nearest and dearest friends ? Is He not the one who ought to have your whole heart, dear children ? Has He not shed His blood for you—died for you ? Does He not love *you* ? Oh, yes ! He loves each one, and He calls you His beloved ones. Shall He not then be your Beloved too ? Oh, surely yes ! Give Him your whole heart now, while you have the opportunity. He has promised to His faithful people,—“ I will be as the dew unto Israel : he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.” (Hosea xiv. 5.)

One other verse about the lily I must tell you. It is from the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is teaching a lesson to people who care about their clothes: "Consider the lilies of the field, how



"Consider the Lilies."—MATT. vi. 28.

they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these." (Matt. vi. 28, 29.) However finely people dress themselves, they can never attain to the beauty of a flower. Even Solomon, the grandest of kings, in all *his* glory, was never so gorgeously arrayed as the lily of which the Saviour speaks. How

foolish then it is for people to care so much for gay clothing, when even the smallest flowers are far more beautiful than they. I hope you will not forget to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," remembering "that all other things shall be added unto you."

By cool Siloam's shady rill,  
How sweet the lily grows :  
How sweet the breath, beneath the hill,  
Of Sharon's dewy rose.

Lo ! such the child, whose early feet  
The paths of peace have trod ;  
Whose secret heart, with influence sweet,  
Is upward drawn to God.

By cool Siloam's shady rill  
The lily must decay :  
The rose that blooms beneath the hill  
Must shortly fade away.

And soon, too soon, the win-  
Of man's maturer  
Will shake the sc  
And stormy

Oh ! Thou, w'  
Within Th  
Whose years  
Were all t

Dependant c  
We seek '  
In childhoo  
To keep v



## QUESTIONS ON FLOWERS.

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Q. Do many flowers grow in Palestine?

A. Yes: a great variety.

Q. Which are the only two flowers mentioned in the Bible?

A. The rose and the lily.

Q. What flower was first brought to England from Damascus?

A. The damask rose.

Q. Where is it said flowers come in the spring?

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    ornaments in the form of

    and Temple.

    once wish to crown

    h thorns?

    blems?

    ertainty of life.

*Q.* Whose beauty was compared with a fading flower?

*A.* Israel's.

*Q.* Whose cheeks were said to be like sweet flowers and lilies?

*A.* Jesus'.

*Q.* Who is called the "Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valley"?

*A.* The Saviour.

*Q.* Who prophesied that Sharon should be a wilderness?

*A.* Isaiah.

*Q.* What animals are fond of feeding among the lilies?

*A.* Gazelles.

*Q.* Of whom was it said, "He shall grow as a lily"?

*A.* Israel.

*Q.* Who told people to consider the lilies of the field?

*A.* Jesus.

*Q.* What king, in all his glory, was not even so beautiful as the lily?

*A.* Solomon.



## TREES OF THE BIBLE.

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WHEN Moses was speaking to the children of Israel, shortly before their entrance into the land of promise, and his own death, he says thus :—"The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land ; a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills ; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates ; a land of oil olive, and honey ; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it ; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass." (Deut. viii. 7—9.) Was all this true? Yes. Of all lands the most fruitful, the richest, and the best, was that good land. • Fresh clear water to drink was there, fields of waving corn, fruit-trees laden with delicious fruit, and tall stately trees affording delightful shade, as well as giving wood of a firm valuable kind, so useful to mankind.

All this was true of Palestine *once*. But now, there are few trees left ; the magnificent forests of oak, cedar, palm, and pine, are no more ! The oliveyards are poor and insignificant ; the

vines do not yield grapes like the grapes of Eshcol, which were brought by the spies to the children of Israel, whilst on the other side Jordan. Why is the land now filled with ruined cities, barren mountains, dried-up brooks, and blighted trees? It is the sin of man, dear children, which has done it. Scattered amongst the nations,—despised and hated,—the Jews wander far away, not only from the land of promise on earth, but far also from the *heavenly* Canaan; not knowing their Saviour; suffering from God's curse,—a curse they have brought upon themselves, when they cried,—“Crucify Him, crucify Him. His blood be on us, and on our children.” Their land is now overrun by wild Arab tribes: a dirty, degraded race,—robbers and murderers, who glory in their sin; men who will not take the trouble to cultivate the rich soil of the land, which would yield a splendid increase if it was but tilled. So it lies waste; waiting until that glorious day shall dawn, when Messiah shall come to restore His people, and the land shall again become as the garden of the Lord. When, “instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.” (Is. lv. 13.) Perhaps there are few things which are oftener mentioned in

the Bible than trees, and many by name. Before I speak of each tree separately, I want to give you an idea of trees themselves, as spoken of in God's Word.

On the third day of creation, the trees, grass, and herbs, and every thing having seed within itself, was brought into existence. \*You perhaps know, that trees and plants contain, at certain seasons, either stones or seeds, which, if planted, yield the same kind of fruit or flower as that from which they are taken. This is what is meant by "seed within itself." You know, also, that it was by eating fruit from a particular tree that Adam and Eve sinned. Fruit is very tempting ; this you can understand, for I doubt not you have all had the same temptation as Eve, when rich ripe fruit has been before you, of which you knew you must not partake. Among the laws given to the Israelites by Moses, before they entered Canaan, was a command respecting fruit ; which was not to be gathered for three years after they had planted the trees. Some persons say that no fruit is good for food until the fourth year ; that it is better for three years to pluck off the blossoms, and that the fruit will afterwards be much improved. This may be the reason ; but I think God gave the command also to try the faith of the people, as he had tried the faith of Adam and Eve in Paradise.

The fruit of the fourth year was to be given to God as an offering, with songs of gladness and joy. And surely the Israelites would willingly offer this first-fruit to Him who had given them that good and beautiful land. It is the duty of all people to give to God a kind of first-fruits of what they have, whether in money or other things, and God will bless them for it. The fruit of the fifth year, and thenceforth, was to be the property of the people: only when they gathered it, they were to leave a little for the poor, who had no fruit of their own.

This, again, should teach us a lesson: in the time of our riches and happiness we should never forget the poor. This was called the "gleaning;" the same as the gleaning of corn, or scattered grain, which the poor even now are so glad to gather up.

Trees were made for God's praise and glory, and are often in figurative language said to rejoice, and praise Him. (See Psa. cxlviii. 9.) They were also given to make the earth beautiful (Gen. ii. 9), and as food for man and beast. (Gen. i. 29, 30. Deut., xx. 19.) Trees of the wood (Song of Sol. ii. 3) and of the forest, are spoken of in various places of the Bible. (Is. x. 19.) Trees which bore fruit (Eccles. ii. 5. Eze. xlvii. 12. Neh. ix. 25), trees which cast their leaves (Is. vi. 13), and evergreen trees also. (Ps. xxxvii. 35. Jer. xvii. 2.)

I should like you to read the verses of the Bible, in which these things are referred to, for yourselves. Then again, different parts of trees are mentioned: seeds and fruits, the former of which we are told in one place; are sometimes carried by birds and dropped upon the ground; which receives the seed, and the rain and dew watering them, they speedily grow up, and thus increase. (Lev. xxvii. 30. Eze. xxx. 30; xvii. 3—5.) Trees, of course, were likewise planted by man. (Lev. xix. 23.) The leaves of trees are often mentioned. (Isaiah vi. 13. Daniel iv. 12. Matthew xxi. 19.) In heaven, St. John saw a city, and "in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bear twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (Rev. xxii. 2.)

So you see even in heaven there are trees emblems of spiritual things. Then of the roots of trees we find mention (Jer. xvii. 8): of the trunks, or stems (Is. xi. 1; xlv. 19), and of branches often (Lev. xxiii. 40. Dan. iv. 14): tender shoots, too, which come in early spring (Luke xxi. 29, 30). Each kind of tree which is worthless, and does not bear fruit, is cut down; and each tree is known by its fruit: "Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Matt. iii. 10.) The trees here spoken



of are people. Do you know what good fruits in people are? They are good works,—holy deeds,—works done from faith in, and love to, Jesus. Do you think that any one who really loves his Saviour, will not try to work for Him? Oh, no! I am sure that no true believer could help working. And it is by these good works, done in a right spirit, that the world judges whether they are followers of the Saviour. Works in *themselves* cannot save you; but works done from faith in Jesus, are acceptable to God.

In all trees there is a liquid called sap; this, as well as rain and earth, serves to nourish and strengthen the tree. Of holy people compared with trees, it is said,—“The trees of the Lord are full of sap;” that is, they are full of God’s holy Spirit, which nourishes their souls. God’s doctrines, or what He commands us to believe in His Word, are compared with rain:—“My doctrine shall drop as the rain; my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass.” (Deut. xxxii. 2.) Have you ever seen how fresh and green all looks when a shower has fallen upon trees, grass, and flowers, which were parched and dry before? Have you seen how beautiful all appears in the early morning, when the refreshing dew sparkles upon the grass, like diamonds in the sunlight? So is God’s blessing on

the heart; refreshing and nourishing, and without it man is parched and dried up. Oh, may God grant you the "continual dew of His blessing."

Trees, like animals, feel the effects of the sin of man,—for on them plagues often fall. Sometimes locusts devour their fruit and leaves (Exod. x. 5. Deut. xxviii. 42): hail, and frost, and mildew blight them (Exod. ix. 25. Psalm lxxviii. 47), and fire scorches them up (Joel i. 19). The armies of cruel enemies destroy them. (2 Kings xix. 23. Isaiah x. 34\*) When Titus, the Roman general, took Jerusalem, seventy years after the death of Christ, he ordered all the trees to be cut down about Jerusalem. From the stumps, however, of the old trees, especially the olive, a few have arisen; for sometimes they do spring up again in this manner. Job says,—"There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant." (Job xiv. 7—9.)

When land was purchased in the early ages, the trees were sold with it which were upon it. Thus when Abraham bought the field of Machpelah, the trees were especially mentioned as being sold with it. (Gen. xxiii. 17.) Many

people were buried under trees,—of which I shall tell you more by-and-by. Some people also lived under trees, for their shade in hot countries was cool and pleasant. Thus Abraham invited the angels who came to him to rest under the tree near his tent. (Genesis xviii. 4.) Some people planted trees, and worshiped under their shade. Thus did Abraham (Gen. xxi. 33) : but afterwards God forbid the Children of Israel, saying,—“Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord thy God.” (Deut. xvi. 21.) This was done to prevent idolatry, for the heathen nations of Canaan constantly worshiped their idols under groves and green trees. And, in after years, we read much of groves made by the Israelites themselves for this wicked purpose.

Jezebel had no less than *four hundred* prophets of the groves, whom she fed at her own table. The grandmother of king Asa had made an idol in a grove ; therefore he took her idol and burnt it, and allowed her to govern no more. (1 Kings xv. 13.) These are only two of the many sad instances of groves used for idol worship. Even to this day there are, in Palestine, what are called sacred trees. Some are believed to be inhabited by evil spirits, called jin, and some by good spirits. Some of these trees are hung all over with rags, which the poor foolish people tear

from their clothes, and leave for an offering to these spirits, of whom they are so much afraid.

You know, dear children, how useful wood is to us, and so it was also in the days when the Bible was written. The men of old had axes, as we have now, to cut down trees with,—of which you may read in Deuter. xix. 5 ; Psalm lxxiv. 5 ; Matt. iii. 10 ; 2 Kings vi. 5. Costly and beautiful wood was much used in the building of Solomon's Temple ; and various other buildings, mentioned in the Bible, were either made entirely or partly of wood. Mounts for armies, when they besieged places, were sometimes made of wood. (See Deut. xx. 20. Jer. vi. 6.) It was also used for fires ; for there was little, if any, coal known in those days : and idols were made of wood. There is a wonderful description, in Isaiah, of the foolishness of men, in thus making their idols. From one tree, the prophet says, men will make a fire, and cook their food on it ; and with the remainder they will make a god, and fall down and worship it. Well may he add these words : “ None considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire ; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof ; I have roasted flesh and eaten it ; and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination ? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree ? He feedeth

on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Isa. xlv. 19, 20.) Truly it is a strange lie, to believe that in a piece of wood there is the spirit of a god!

Trees were used for another sad purpose,—namely, to hang guilty people upon, who had committed sins worthy of death. This was a punishment commanded by God. (See Deut. xxi. 22, 23.) There was one day,—an ever-memorable one to the Children of Israel,—when five kings, with five armies, came against them, and were delivered into the hands of Joshua and his people. These five kings were slain, and hanged upon five trees, until evening. What a sight that must have been: what a judgment upon God's enemies! Pharaoh's baker was hanged on a tree. (Genesis xl. 19.) It was considered a cursed thing thus to be hanged: the cross of Jesus was in this sense so considered. What says St. Paul?—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. iii. 13.) How can we ever forget, or think lightly of Jesus, when we remember that for our sakes He so humbled Himself? Let us always say, with gratitude,—  
 "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!"

There was a merciful law given to the Jews

by God, with regard to their enemies. They were forbidden to cut down the fruit trees belonging to them, because God had given them for food to all people. The enemies of the Jews were not, as I have before told you, particular in observing this law.

Solomon thought much of trees, and spoke of them from the cedar to the hyssop upon the wall. Trees are likened to many things, and kinds of people, in the Bible. A dry tree, to a useless person (Isaiah lvi. 3): the terrors of the wicked, to the moving of the leaves of trees. (Isa. vii. 2.) Barren trees were compared with the sin of Ephraim (Hosea ix. 16): good trees, which produced good fruit, with good persons: trees with bad fruit, with evil persons (Matt. vii. 17—19). Holy people, or saints, are often compared with good trees. Of them it is said, they shall be like trees planted by rivers of water, that bring forth fruit in season; neither shall their leaves wither, and all they do shall prosper. (Psalm i. 3.) Again: they shall "be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord." (Isa. lxi. 3.) And again: "He shall be as a tree planted by the waters, that spreadeth out her roots to the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." (Jer. xvii. 8.) It is said that the roots of

trees never die altogether ; though the branches may wither and decay, the root contains some life. That trees can bear fruit for ages, is well known. God says,—“As the days of a tree, are the days of my people” (Isa. lxx. 22) : meaning they shall live for ever. Of their good works, or fruits, it is written,—“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life ; and he that winneth souls is wise.” (Prov. xi. 30 ; xv. 4.) Kings and mighty men are compared with trees, which God can cast down or raise up as He pleases. (Ezek. xvii. 34.) Nebuchadnezzar, in his dream, saw a mighty spreading tree, casting forth its branches, with beautiful leaves and fruit. It was to be hewn down, its branches cut off, the fruit and leaves scattered, nothing but the stump was to remain. This tree meant himself. He was great and rich, and his kingdom was spreading and wide, but the king’s heart was proud and lofty ; therefore God humbled him, by taking his senses from him until he learned his own littleness, and to submit to Him alone. Of wisdom, Solomon says,—“She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her.” (Prov. iii. 18.) This is the wisdom from above, which will make you “wise unto salvation,” if you lay hold upon her.

I have told you of trees, without giving their names. Now let me tell you of some whose names are mentioned in the Bible.

## Trees.

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### PART I.

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#### THE ALMOND TREE.

THE almond tree we do not often see in England. Our climate is too cold for it; but in Palestine it grows and thrives well; and what are called Jordan almonds (named probably from the river of that land), are considered the best of all. It is a pretty, graceful-looking tree, and blossoms long before other trees have begun to do so: as early as February it may be seen covered with white or pinkish tinged blossoms. The fruit, too, comes on so quickly, that often on the same tree may be seen buds, blossoms, and fruit, all at once.

The first time almonds are mentioned in the Bible, is where Jacob told Joseph's brethren to take some almonds, as a present to him, when he was governor of Egypt. (Gen. xliii. 11.) During the time of one of the murmurings of the Israelites in the wilderness, they presumed to say that God had not chosen Aaron for His priest.



God was very angry with them. To show whom He had chosen, He commanded each tribe to bring a rod, and put it in the Tabernacle, and the rod which had blossoms on it should be the tribe chosen for the priesthood. They did so; and next morning, when Moses went into the Tabernacle, he found that the rod of Levi, upon which was Aaron's name, had not only blossomed, but yielded almonds. This was a miracle, and the rebels were convinced. God commanded that this rod should always be kept in the ark, with other holy things, for a remembrance to the people. So long as the ark remained, therefore, it was kept there. Years after, the ark and all its sacred memorials disappeared: it is thought that when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple of Solomon, the ark was destroyed also.

When God sent a vision to Jeremiah, He said, —“What seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen, for I will hasten my word to perform it.” (Jeremiah i. 11, 12.) This meant that as the almond tree was the quickest to bloom of all trees, so it was an emblem of the quickness with which God should make His word to come to pass. In that beautiful chapter of Ecclesiastes, of which I have told you before (see Insects—Grasshopper), Solomon speaks of the time when the “almond tree shall flourish.” That

means, when people grow old their hair generally grows white: this looks like the almond tree when covered with white blossoms, with no leaves appearing at all. It is beautiful to see old people with white hair, waiting patiently for death. The Bible says,—“The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.” I hope, if it is God’s will, you, my little friends, may be spared to honour and serve God, even when your hair is white as the blossoms of the almond tree.

#### THE BAY TREE OR LAUREL.

WELL you know the bright dark green leaves of this tree, I dare say; for when the trees around are leafless and dead, the laurel is green and cheery, even on the coldest winter’s day. Thus in cold or heat, in summer or winter, the bay tree *seems* to flourish. David compares the seeming happiness of the wicked with this: “I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree: yet he passed away, and lo! he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.” (Psa. xxxvii. 35, 36.) It is quite true that sometimes we do see wicked people appear to have great riches and great happiness, while good people are poor and suffering: but this need not make us envious of them. If the wicked do not repent, we know

that all the blessings of this life will do them no good hereafter. \*

Do you remember the parable of the rich man, who was clothed so beautifully, and had such good things to eat every day ; and also the poor beggar, Lazarus, who laid at his gate full of sores, asking only for the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table ? When the rich man died, he was tormented in hell ; when the poor man died, he was carried to Abraham's bosom. And when the rich man asked that Lazarus might even dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool his tongue, it was not granted to him ; while Abraham said,—“ Son, remember thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, likewise Lazarus evil things ; *now* he is comforted, but thou art tormented.”

You must remember however, dear children, that the rich man did not go to hell *because* he was rich, for it is not a sin to be rich ; but he went to hell because he loved his riches and pleasures more than God. Neither did Lazarus go to heaven because on earth he was poor and a beggar, but because he loved God. I have no doubt that even on earth Lazarus would not have changed places with the rich man. He knew that in heaven Jesus had prepared a mansion for him, and pleasures for evermore, far better than any that the rich man enjoyed.

God can make the poorest of people quite as happy as the rich. Do not therefore covet riches, if God has not given them to you; but if He *has*, see that with your earthly riches you lay up treasure in heaven; see that the poor or the suffering are the better for your riches. Remember you have a Master in heaven, to whom you must give an account of the manner in which you have spent what He has given to you.

#### THE JUNIPER TREE.

THE juniper tree of the Bible is not the kind of tree known generally by that name,—on which grow the berries from which a spirit, much used in England, is made. The juniper of the Bible is a tree which grows chiefly in the desert, of about eight or ten feet high. It is not unlike broom in appearance, and has a pink-and-white flower. Under its shade the Bedouin Arabs often sleep; and though not a very good shelter from the sun, the shade is still pleasant in the barren desert.

There is a man mentioned in the Bible, a bold, strong, active servant of God, who wore a coarse hair garment, and travelled about, inspired by Him, doing many mighty deeds. He feared not to come even to the wicked king's palace, and stand before him and say what a heavy judgment God would send upon him. Moreover, he

gathered together the prophets of Baal, showed how false their idol was, and had them slain. All this he did without any fear; but when the idolatrous queen sent word to him that she would kill him, he suddenly felt afraid, and for a time, forgetting that the same God who had commanded the ravens to feed him, could take care of him still,—he fled for his life,—and



Elijah Sleeping under a Juniper Tree.

“went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a *juniper* tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and

said, It is enough ; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers." (1 Kings xix. 4.) This was not a right prayer for the man of God, but he was weary and heart-sick ; and though he did not wish Jezebel to kill him, he wished God to take his life from him. Gently God made his eyes to close, and he lay down and slept under the juniper tree. By-and-by an angel touched him, and said,—“ Arise, and eat.” Then he saw a baked cake and a cruse of water. He ate and drank, and again slept. A second time the angel woke him, and again he ate and drank. And so satisfying did God make that food, that for forty days and forty nights he needed no other. Was not this wonderful ? Need I tell you who this prophet was ? It was Elijah ; that man who made kings to tremble,—who, when all other prophets of God were afraid to speak boldly, stood forth before the thousands of Israel, and proclaimed—“ the Lord he is God ! ”

Job mentions the juniper as if its roots were meat. He saith of the poor wicked men whom he had once thought beneath him, and who now made a mock of him in his sorrow,—“ For want and famine they were solitary ; fleeing into the wilderness, in former times desolate and waste ; who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots for their meat.” (Job. xxx. 3, 4.) \* Mal.

\* See “ The Land and the Book.” Dr. Thompson.

lows are a kind of greens, boiled and eaten by very poor people. The roots of the juniper were bitter, and never used for food; but the Arabs even now turn them into a kind of coal or charcoal, which is said to make a very hot fire. It has been thought that Job meant these men ate the mallows, cooked upon a juniper-root fire.

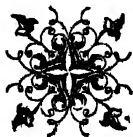
In the Psalms this is also spoken of: "What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper." This meant, perhaps, the fate of those wicked persons who do not speak the truth, who will hereafter be tormented in that fire which is never quenched,—with which the heat of juniper coals is compared.

#### THE CHESTNUT OR PLANE TREE.

WHAT is called in the Bible the chestnut tree, is generally thought to mean the plane tree of the East. It is a very grand tree, with wide spreading branches; it has a fine straight stem, and very smooth bark; it has broad, green, divided leaves; its flowers are very small, and they come out a little before the leaves. The wood of this tree is fine and hard, and when it is old looks like walnut wood. The plane tree, or chestnut, as it is called in the Bible, is said

to be one of the finest trees in the world; and its leaves are so large, thick, and broad, that they are considered the best protection from the sun's heat in summer,—while it is curious also, that in winter the rays of the sun strike through its branches better than through those of any other tree.

In Ezekiel's vision of the power, beauty, and greatness of the Assyrians, it is said,—“The chestnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty. I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches, so that all the trees of Eden that were in the garden of God envied him.” (Exek. xxxi. 8, 9.) We also read of Jacob using rods of green poplar, of the hazel and chestnut tree. (Gen. xxx. 37.)





## Trees.

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### PART II.

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#### THE BRAMBLE

SOME persons think that the shrub called the prickly pear is the bramble of the Bible. Others again, maintain that the bramble we know is meant. No doubt however it is a thorny, pricking sort of shrub, not large enough to be called a tree. The margin of our Bibles, in Judges ix. 14, says, the bramble was a thistle, of which there are numbers growing in Palestine. On Mount Gerizim, a young man, named Jotham, once stood, and in a loud voice spake a parable, called, "The Parable of the Trees." The story was this:—The trees once wished to make a king over them, and they asked the olive to reign; but the olive had other work to do, and declined. The fig tree was next invited, but the fig tree preferred to be as God had made it. They then asked the vine; but the vine, so useful to man, refused to leave its fruit: so then the trees invited the bramble; and the bramble, the

least useful and the most unlikely, with great vanity undertook to be the king of the trees. After he had spoken this parable, Jotham fled away.

Do you remember what he meant by the story? Jotham had once many brothers, and one half-brother. This half-brother, Abimelech, was a bad man, and when his father died, he arose and destroyed all his brothers but Jotham, who escaped, and made himself the judge of the land. Jotham wished to show the people of Shechem how wicked they had been in their choice, and how unfit and worthless was the man they had made their governor or ruler. The people had reason to repent their foolishness; for soon Abimelech quarrelled with them, fought against them, destroyed their city, and sowed it with salt, which was a sign of utter desolation.

#### THE MUSTARD TREE. •

THIS also is a tree, about which learned men differ as to what is meant. There is plenty of *wild* mustard growing in Palestine, and near the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus spoke of the grain of mustard seed. Some travellers think that the mustard tree of the Bible, is a tree or plant called *Salvadora Persica*. It has a very small seed, yet sometimes grows to the height of twenty-five feet; and forms not only a shelter for the

fowls of the air, but even might do so for a horse and his rider. The seeds of this tree are hot and burning, like the mustard we eat.

This is the parable, or useful lesson, Jesus taught from it:—"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, ~~it~~ is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." (Matt. xiii. 31, 32.) When God puts His grace into the heart of man, it generally comes very gradually, there is little to be seen, and small fruit appears. But as time passes on the believer grows and increases in grace and knowledge, and by his influence and example, spreads God's Word around, and strengthens and shelters weaker Christians. Jesus, also, again alludes to the mustard seed, when speaking to His disciples, after their petition for an increase of faith (Luke xvii. 6): He says,—“If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.” You see what a great and wonderful thing faith, or belief in God, is, and what mighty deeds it can accomplish.

St. Paul, in Hebrews xi, which is all about

faith, gives a wonderful list of what it had wrought by His people, "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong." Faith enabled men patiently to bear the flaming faggot, knowing that though their bodies were burned, the crown of martyrdom was awaiting them in heaven. Faith has made the poor rich, the death-bed happy, the grave the gate of heaven. I wish for you, my dear children, that you may have a simple faith in Jesus,—in all He requires of you in His Word. It is true you may not now have the faith to work miracles, for the day for miracles has past. But you can have the faith which believes in the blood of Jesus,—which rests in His love, and which can brighten and cheer you in the dark day of pain and trouble through which you may have to pass, before you leave this world and "enter into that rest which remaineth for the people of God."

#### THE VINE

I DOUBT not you all know that the fruit of the vine is the grape, from which almost all wine is made. And I dare say you will remember some of the many places in which the vine is mentioned in the Bible.

The vine is known almost all over the world, and perhaps no fruit is so useful, or more generally liked. In England, though many grapes are grown, few ripen out of doors, it is too cold for them ; but the hot-house grapes of England are now esteemed the finest in the world. Formerly the land of Palestine produced those of the finest quality and largest size. Perhaps you remember about the twelve spies, sent by Moses from the wilderness, to search out the land of Canaan. He told them to see what sort of people and cities there were,—whether there was plenty of corn or not ; and he added,—“ Be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruits of the land. Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.” (Numbers xiii. 20.) The spies went out, and came to a valley called Eshcol. Here the grapes were splendid : they cut down one bunch, which was so large that two men had to carry it. Notwithstanding all they saw of Canaan, and all God’s goodness in promising to help them to conquer the land, these spies came back and frightened the people,—telling them the nations of Canaan were too strong for them to conquer. Only two, Joshua and Caleb, spoke the truth, and declared that God’s power was able to give them victory. The people, however, would not listen to the two men. They murmured against God, and as the 95th Psalm

says,—“He swore in His wrath, they should not enter into His rest.” This rest was the land of Canaan. Of all the thousands and thousands of men and women who came out of Egypt, two only,—the two faithful spies,—were allowed to enter the good land. The little children of these unbelieving Israelites, forty years afterwards, led by Joshua, did enter Canaan; but their fathers, for these long years, were made to wander in the wilderness. Yet God gave them time to repent of their sin; so we may hope that when death came upon them, they might still enter that heavenly rest, which remaineth for the people of God.

The first vineyard, or orchard of vines mentioned in the Bible, was that planted by Noah, after the flood. He was called an husbandman, or vine dresser. It appears he made wine from his grapes; and I am sorry to tell you that on one occasion he drank too much, and became drunken, so that he did not know what he was doing. Drunkenness is a sin God hates, and He has said,—“drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” There are two or three parables in the Bible about vineyards. One is that of the labourers hired into a vineyard,—some early, some later,—who all received the same reward. This vineyard represents God’s Church. In it all are expected to work. Those

who were first called into the Church were the Jews, afterwards the Gentiles were called. The Gentiles accepted God's call, and worked hard in the vineyard after they had entered it, and God gave them eternal life in heaven, as well as the Jews.

In heaven, dear children, there will be many found who have loved Christ only a short time, yet have worked more for Him than those who have been professing Christianity far longer. Therefore, in heaven, some who have been outwardly first, shall be last. This parable teaches again that works can never pay the debt of sin,—that salvation is God's free gift to sinners. For indeed no works, however many, can save us,—nothing but the merits of Jesus can do that; but God has commanded us to work from *love*. The payment for the debt of sin has been made long before.

There is again another parable, of two sons, whose father said to the elder,—“Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.” The elder son at first refused, but afterwards went. The younger son said he would go, but did not. These two sons represented two classes; one who were outwardly sinners, and another who, like the Pharisees, were outwardly religious, and pretended to do God's works, but who really did them not. Of the sinners despised by the Pharisees, many

came afterwards, confessed, and were sorry for their sins, and then went to do their Master's work ; while the Pharisees, professing righteousness, neglected to do the will of God.

There was also another parable spoken by our Lord, about a certain man who planted a vineyard, and let it to husbandmen to take care of, while he went into a far country. By and by, he sent servants to fetch some of the fruit ; but these wicked vinedressers beat and stoned them, and gave them no fruit. Again, the owner sent more servants, but these were illtreated and sent away empty. Last of all, he said he would send his son, for they would reverence him. Instead of doing so, when they saw him they said he was the heir, and that they would kill him, and keep the vineyard for themselves. The vineyard here means the kingdom of the Jews ; the vinedressers were the Jewish nation ; the servants were the prophets and teachers God sent, from time to time, to His rebellious people, who, instead of rendering obedience to God, continued wilfully to sin against Him. The Son, so beloved, is the Saviour, sent at last, whom these wicked men crucified.

The Pharisees knew that this parable was spoken against them ; and Jesus warned them that soon the Gospel should be taken from them



and given to the Gentiles. They hated Him, and began even then, to seek how they might kill Him.

There is another parable of a vineyard, in Isaiah v., in which the Jews were said to bring forth wild grapes, instead of the true rich grapes of the vineyard. These wild grapes meant works of sin—not works of grace. They had been idolatrous and rebellious; truly their works were like sour, bad grapes!

Vines live to a great age: a vineyard of a hundred years old is considered quite young. The grapes are of two kinds, red and white. When ripe and gathered, they are put into a winepress, by which the juice is pressed out, and it is then made into wine.

Here is a type of a Christian in sorrow. He is like the grapes in the winepress. Does trouble and sorrow make the Christian useless? Oh, no! it brings out the sweetness of his soul, just as the pressing brings out the juice of the grape. In olden times, the winepress was trodden by men, and the stamping and pressing required was hard work. Of Jesus it is said,—“Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?” Then Jesus replies,—“I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me,” etc. (Isaiah lxiii. 3.) This hard labour

Jesus passed through, when stained with His own blood, He hung upon the cross, where He bore alone the sins of the whole world; none could help Him,—none could die for Him.

The wine made from grapes is always considered best when old. Old wine is called in the Bible “wines on the lees, well refined;” of which God promises to provide a feast for His people. From the juice of the vine, vinegar as well as wine is made. Vinegar is sour and unwholesome; while wine, taken with moderation, is good for people. Vinegar is like the works of those who do not honour God: wine is like the good and holy fruits which His people yield in their lives.

The first miracle Jesus Christ ever performed was at a marriage of Cana of Galilee; and there, when they wanted wine, He made for them a fresh and large supply out of water, placed in six water-pots of stone.

Some years ago, I was shown in a church, at Cologne, in Germany, an old looking broken red pot, which I was gravely told by a Roman Catholic guide was one of the water-pots from Cana of Galilee. I did not of course believe it, as it was a most unlikely thing to be true. It is a pity to see so many people setting a high value on these supposed relics, and neglecting to seek the hidden spiritual treasures of the Gospel.

The produce of the vine has always been highly esteemed, and sometimes God has punished sinners by destroying the vintage, or harvest. In the times of the first kings of Israel, an officer of state was appointed to look after the royal vineyards. When the gathering time for grapes came, the Israelites were commanded to leave some grapes for the poor who had no grapes of their own: it was the same in the olive harvest.

There were special laws as regarded the cultivation of the vine, of which you may read in the books of Moses. One was, that a man need not be a soldier if he had planted a vineyard, of the fruit of which he had not eaten. Vineyards were sometimes mortgaged,—that is, money was borrowed by the owner of a vineyard, and if not paid back in a certain time, the vineyard was to belong to the man from whom the money was borrowed. In the time of Nehemiah, many of the Jews had mortgaged their vineyards, because of a famine. When God blessed His people He made their fruits abundant. Judah, from whose seed Jesus came, was thus blessed by his father Jacob: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine,

and his clothes in the blood of grapes : his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." (Gen. xlix. 10—12.) Shiloh, meant Jesus : binding the foal to the vine, meant fastening the asses under the vines, and allowing them to eat of the tender green leaves of the trees : his eyes red with wine, meant the riches and plenty which should be possessed by the tribe of Judah.

Dried grapes are spoken of in the Bible, as well as those pressed for wine : these are called raisins. Abigail, who was afterwards David's wife, brought him a present of one hundred clusters of raisins. (1 Sam. xxv. 18 ; xxx. 12.) The wood of the vine is not good for anything, except fuel. This is referred to in Ezekiel 15 : "As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem." (See also Ezek. v. 2—5. John xv. 6.)

In vineyards, persons were appointed to keep a special watch, that no harm happened to the grapes during the vintage season. The vineyards were generally hedged round, or walled in, and had watch-towers. When the grapes began to ripen, lodges were built for the vineyard-keepers—little frail shelters, only meant to last a few weeks, and which storm and wind would soon destroy. Isaiah, when he speaks of the desolation of Israel says,—“Your country is desolate,

your cities are burned with fire : your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city." (Is. i. 7, 8.)

I have told you how much the fruit of the vine has been esteemed in all ages. But there were some persons who were commanded not to eat the fruit, or drink the juice of the vine : these were the Nazarites and the Rechabites. The Nazarites were set apart in a peculiar manner for God's service. Some were Nazarites from their birth, some only for a certain time. These men were neither to cut their hair, shave themselves, nor drink wine of any kind. Samson and Samuel were the Nazarites most celebrated in the Old Testament ; John the Baptist, in the New. The Rechabites were an Arab tribe, descended from the father-in-law of Moses. Jonadab, the son of Rechab, one of their great men, forbade them ever to drink wine,—and most obediently they kept his command.

When God wished to show the Israelites how wicked and disobedient they had been to Him, He told the prophet Jeremiah to try the faith of the Rechabites, by offering them wine to drink, but they refused at once to taste it. Then God commanded the prophet to go and tell the people

of Israel, what an example these Arabs had set them of obedience. Would it not make them ashamed of their wickedness? No, the people cared not, and therefore God brought on them all the evil He had threatened; while, at the same time, He told Jeremiah to pronounce His



Jeremiah offering Wine to the Rechabites.

blessing on these Rechabites: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever." (Jer. xxxv. 19.)

Has God's word come true? Yes, indeed it

has! Away in the deserts of Arabia, a tribe still remains—the tribe of Rechabites. Separate, and proud of their position, they dwell there,—a perpetual reminder of God's reward for their obedience. God loves obedience more than any other duty: to obey, He says, is better than sacrifice. Obedience to God and our parents, are the great commandments of the Gospel: *from this duty come all other duties.* I hope you will always remember this.

There are four places mentioned in the Bible as famous for grapes: Eshcol (Numbers xiii. 24), Sibmah (Isa. xvi. 8, 9), Lebanon (Hosea xiv. 7), Egypt (Psalm lxxviii. 47; lxxx. 8). The grapes of Sodom, on the contrary, are mentioned as bad and unwholesome. (Deut. xxxii. 32.) I could tell you much more about the vine from the Bible, but it would take too much time to do so. I will therefore, at the end of this part, give you a list of verses to find for yourselves, which I hope will prove a pleasure to you in seeking them out. Meanwhile, there are a few more things with which the vine has been compared in the Bible.

With the Children of Israel (Ps. lxxx. 8. Isa. v. 2—7): the quickness of its growth is compared to God's people growing in grace (Hosea xiv. 7): the beautiful ripe branches to the beauties of Christ's Church (Song of Sol. vii. 8). \*A vine that

does not bear fruit, to the wicked (Hos. x, 1). The fathers' eating sour grapes is said to set their children's teeth on edge, that means, that wicked parents often have wicked children. (Jer. xxxi. 29, 30. Ezekiel xviii. 2.).

Last of all, in that beautiful conversation between Jesus and His disciples, so soon before His death, He says,—“I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman.” The branches of the vine are people who profess and call themselves Christians; some are really holy, some not. The first are the *good* and fruit-bearing branches, the latter the unfruitful ones. These Jesus says His Father taketh away, because they are worthless, and they are burned. The good branches are purged, or dressed, to make them still more fruitful. This dressing means God's teaching and leading by His Spirit, and sometimes also the afflictions He sends. Then again, Jesus says, if the branches do *not* stay in the vine, they die. Now if people do not keep near to Jesus they cannot be true believers. The branches of the vine need the sap, or nourishment which comes from the roots of the vine: so do Christians require the holy oil of God's Spirit, to make them continue holy.

• The most interesting Scripture event about the vine, to those who love Jesus, is that in which He gave them bread to eat and wine to



drink, the night when He was betrayed to be crucified. What a sad and solemn thing, must that last Supper have been,—when Jesus told His disciples that He should not drink wine again with them until He drank it new in His Father's kingdom, where He promised that they should be with Him.

This holy supper is called the "Lord's Supper," the "Eucharist," or the "Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." And people who wish to keep in mind the death of Jesus, come to the holy feast, and eat and drink in remembrance of their Saviour, —praying that God will make them truly sorry for their sins, and cause them to lead new and holy lives in His service.

Children are not admitted to the Sacrament until they have been confirmed by the Bishop, when about fifteen years of age,—then they are considered old enough to know and understand the solemn service.

I hope the time will come, dear children, when in true faith and repentance you will draw near to the holy table; and while outwardly you eat the bread and drink the wine, you will in your hearts feed on the love of Jesus, and on all His precious promises, while you also drink of the spiritual wine, and bless Him for that precious blood which has been shed for *you*, and for many, for the remission of sins.

REFERENCES TO THE VINE TO BE FOUND  
IN THE BIBLE.

2 Kings iv. 39. 2 Chron. xxvi. 10. 2 Kings xxv. 12. Deut. vi. 11; viii. 8; xxviii. 39. Lev. xxv. 3. Deut. xxxii. 14. Song of Sol. vi. 11; ii. 15; viii. 11. Lev. xxvi. 5. Deut. xxiii. 24. Psa. cv. 32, 33; lxxx. 15; lxxviii. 47. Num. xiii. 20—24; xxij. 24. Exod. xxii. 5. Gen. xl. 10. Isa. xviii. 5; vii. 23; xxvii. 2; xxxii. 12; xvi. 8, 9; v. 2—5. Jer. xxxi. 30. Isa. lxi. 5. Jer. xlviii. 32; viii. 13. Hosea ix. 10; xiv. 7. Jer. xii. 10. Amos iv. 9. Hag. i. 9—11. Zeph. i. 13. Nehem. xiii. 15. Prov. xxiv. 30, 31. Joel i. 7, 12; ii. 22. Hosea ii. 12. Zech. viii. 12. Hag. ii. 19. Job xv. 33. Mal. iii. 11. Matt. xxvi. 29.

LIGN ALOES.

THIS tree is, I believe, only once mentioned in the Bible. When Balaam, the wicked prophet, was made (though he did not desire it) to bless the Children of Israel, in part of his speech he said thus: "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters." (Num. xxiv. 5, 6.) The lign aloe was a beautiful aromatic, or sweet-smelling tree,—something like the olive tree, only often growing

larger. The comparison of the Israelites with lign aloes, meant that their fame should spread far and wide, and that they should be great and blessed.

Aloes are two or three times spoken of in the Bible, as perfumes, not as trees. Of the kingdom of Christ, when compared with a beautiful queen, it is said,—“All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia.” (Psa. xlv. 8) Beds were sometimes scented with aloes. (Prov. vii. 17.) Jesus also says of His church, that her plants, or works, are sweet with many spices:—“myrrh and aloes, with all chief spices.” (Song of Sol. iv. 14) When Joseph of Arimathæa had begged the body of Jesus and taken it away, Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, brought a mixture of “myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pounds weight.” (John xix. 39.) These sweet spices were to anoint the dead body of Jesus, and to preserve it from corruption. This was a kind action, and proved that Nicodemus loved Jesus, though he was afraid openly to show it. Many persons feel shame, as Nicodemus did: it is sad not openly to own our love to Him who has done so much for us. We should pray God to forgive our fear, and make us bold for His truth. There is a hymn which speaks of this false shame, beginning,—

“Ashamed of Jesus! Can it be?  
A mortal man ashamed of Thee?

Scorned be the thought by rich and poor.

Oh, may I scorn it more and more!"

Let this ever be your desire, dear little friends.

#### THE ALMUG OR ALGUM TREE.

THIS tree was used by Solomon, partly for the wood-work of the temple, and also for his own palace. Beside the pillars and terraces for God's temple, it was used for making harps and psalteries for the singers. (1 Kings x. 11, 12. 2 Chron. ix. 10, 11) This costly and beautiful wood was brought by Hiram, king of Tyre, in his ships, from a place called Ophir, and is supposed to be what is called red sandal-wood, which has a most delicious smell, and which is still used in Persia and India for making costly things. Some Jewish writers call it coral, but this was not correct. They perhaps meant what is called coral wood.

#### THE CYPRESS.

THIS tree is very dark and grave-looking. It is also an evergreen. Its name is taken from the Island of Cyprus, where even now it grows in great beauty. The Pagans of olden times made it a sacred tree to Pluto, or the god of hell,—a false god in whom they believed. This tree was therefore considered a sign of death, and you will often hear of cypress trees being used at funerals

or planted over graves. Sometimes wreaths of cypress were made and hung on tombstones. The wood of this tree is much valued. It lasts very long, and can be beautifully polished : it is of a pale red colour. Do you remember reading, in the Acts of the Apostles, about St. Paul at Ephesus? In this city people worshiped a goddess called Diana. They had built for her a magnificent temple ; so splendid was it that it was one of the seven wonders of the world, of which perhaps you may have heard.

This temple had been 220 years in building. It was very long and very wide, and had no less than one hundred and twenty-seven pillars, each sixty feet high, to support the building. These pillars had been given by some king. Cedar and cypress woods were much used for this building, and the great doors were made of the wood of the cypress. When an historian wrote of it four hundred years after, he described them as being still as fresh as ever, which showed how lasting the wood must be. You have perhaps heard of St. Peter's church, at Rome. Once the doors of this great church were also of cypress, and were said to be a thousand years old when they were taken down, and brass ones put up instead. The cypress tree is mentioned in Isaiah, when the prophet speaks of the carpenter making idols of it. "He heweth him down cedars, and

taketh, the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest." (Isaiah xlv. 14.)

## THE ASH.

THE ash is a tall elegant tree, which will grow almost anywhere : on the mountain, in the forest, or by the sea. Next to the oak its wood is the most useful, as many kinds of things are made of it. It has been called "the husbandman's tree, because of its use, and also the "Venus of the forest," because of its beauty and grace. Venus was worshiped by the ancients as the goddess of beauty.

Ages ago the soft inner bark was used for writing upon, before paper was invented. This was generally known by the name of Philyra, but by the Romans it was called Liber ; from which we have the name *library*, or place for books. This ash bark lasts so much longer than paper, that there are still remaining some old writings on it, more than one thousand years old. The ash is mentioned almost directly after the cypress, in the description of the carpenter's making idols. "He planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn : for he will take thereof, and warm himself ; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread ; yea, he maketh a god, and worshipeth it ; he maketh it a graven

image, and falleth down thereto." (Is. xliv. 14, 15.)

How sad to think of all this, and to know that there are still poor heathen who are worshiping and falling down to idols made of wood and stone. Perhaps you do not know that there are more heathens than Christians still in the world. I hope you will not forget to pray for these poor creatures ; and when you can, help to send missionaries to preach to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



## Trees.

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### PART III.

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#### THE CEDAR.

PERHAPS there is no tree mentioned in the Bible in terms of such admiration as the cedar. It was beautiful and gigantic; while the sweet smell of its wood, and the long time it lasted, made it highly valued by the Israelites. "The cedars of Lebanon" are so called because they grow on the mountains of Lebanon, the most northern part of the land of promise. The cedar is an evergreen, with very wide spreading branches, which grow outward instead of upwards. It is often seventy or eighty feet in height. A curious thing has been observed in the cedar: the more the branches spread the wider the roots spread also; so that no tree is planted more firmly in the ground, or less likely to be blown down by storm or wind. The roots being so extensive also enables the rain to drop freely upon them, which strengthens them, so as to make the tree richer and better. Of the spread



of the roots of the cedar, when comparing it with God's blessings on Israel, Hosea says,—he shall “cast forth his roots as Lebanon” (Hos. xiv. 5), which in this verse means the cedars of Lebanon. In Ezekiel xxxi. there is a beautiful description of the cedar, with which the Assyrian is compared. His fair branches, shadowing shroud, and high stature, and his top among the thick boughs; whilst the streams of water made him great, and under his shadow all the nations dwelt. And it is said that the trees in the garden of the Lord envied him.

Some travellers speak of finding cedar trees in different parts of Palestine, but they are not the celebrated well-known kind. You must not think either, that the cedar wood from which pencils are made, is the same as the cedar of Lebanon. Two or three times in the Bible (Levit. xiv. 4, 49, 51. Numbers xix. 6), we read of cedar wood being used as incense for purifying, when the Children of Israel were wandering in the wilderness. This cedar was the wood of a kind of juniper, which grew in the mountain crevices of Sinai and the desert. There are two kinds of cedars growing about these mountains; but on only one particular spot do those trees grow which were used by Solomon for the temple.

These trees are six thousand feet above the level of the Mediterranean Sea. The road is

most wild, grand, and difficult to reach. There is snow all round them, except in the height of summer. They grow on the brow, or side of the mountain, on rocky and uneven ground: beneath them are deep, dark valleys. The sound of gushing waterfalls is all that is heard in the solemn silence around; sometimes the wind howls sorrowfully among the branches, making travellers almost tremble with the unearthly scene. Is there not something very grand, yet awful in the thought,—that these cedars are the only unchanged, living remains of that time, when God was worshipped amongst the happy Israelites; when they loved His law and dwelt peacefully in the land He had given them? Some of these trees are supposed really to have lived three thousand years,—that is, from the time of Solomon. Ages, therefore, have rolled over their heads, storms have beat upon them, and few remain to tell the story of a happy time, now no more, and to mourn as it were for the sad desolations which have passed over the land. Who knows: perhaps these venerable trees, which lived in Solomon's greatness and through the humiliation of Jesus, will yet be standing at the second coming of a greater than Solomon, and shall shake at the trumpet of the great Archangel, and echo to the glad shout of the restored Jews,—“Blessed is He that cometh in

the name of the Lord : " their aged heads, still green through these ages of time, shall shake at the voice of the Lord, and join in the gladness of the whole creation. Who knows that this may not be so ? The time seems drawing near when the Saviour shall come again : not as the lowly and despised man, but as the King of Glory, and Judge of mankind. How do you feel when you hear of this second coming of Jesus ? Are you glad or sorry ? If you can rejoice, you are blessed indeed ; but if you do not feel this joy, ask God to give it you, and make you sincerely to desire the presence of the Saviour.

There are a number of Greeks, Armenians, and Maronites (religious sects), now living in Palestine, who go every year, on what is called the Feast of the Transfiguration, to celebrate their service under one of the oldest and largest trees on Lebanon. Here they build a simple altar of stone, and worship ; and though we do not believe that the doctrines of these people are those of the Bible, yet we like to see them (even though they differ from us) regarding reverently these trees, the remembrance of which must be dear to all who know and love the story of old.

Travellers differ very much as to the number left of these ancient trees : some have said there

are seven ; but a recent writer, who has lived more than twenty years\* on the borders of Palestine, says there are about four or five hundred remaining ; though all of course are not so ancient as the days of Solomon. Many young trees spring up, but are soon destroyed by wild animals or Arabs, who care not to keep and protect them.

There are many cedars planted in Europe, which have been brought from Lebanon, and grow well. The cones, or fruit of the cedar tree, are also often gathered and kept as curiosities. You will remember, I dare say, reading in the Bible, how Solomon directed Hiram, king of Tyre, to send him plenty of cedar trees for the Temple of God. And we are told how cheap he made cedar wood in Jerusalem, by the number he obtained. (1 Kings x. 27.) The wood of the cedar is of reddish colour, and has a pleasant smell ; it does not polish well, but it lasts long, and no great Jewish building was considered complete without it. When the second Temple was built at Jerusalem, by Zerubbabel and Jeshua, the Jews, though they were so poor, still sent for cedar trees for the wood work, all the way to Lebanon : many, many miles away. (Ez a iii. 7.) In Bethlehem there is a church, built by the Empress Helena, in remembrance

\* Dr. Thompson. •

of the birth of Jesus Christ. It is perhaps the oldest Christian Church still standing, and the beams of it are made of cedar of Lebanon.

I must now tell you more particularly about some of the verses in the Bible in which the cedar is mentioned. You have already heard of the buildings in which cedar wood was used. Ezekiel says that the masts of ships, and chests to contain valuable clothing were made from it. (See Ezek. xxvii. 5, 24.) And "Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon." (Song of Solomon iii. 9.) It was also used for making idols. (Isa. xlv. 14.)

They were the highest trees which grew in Palestine. God, when speaking of His goodness in destroying the enemies of Israel, says,—“Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of cedars.” (Amos ii. 9. Isaiah xxxvii. 24. Ezekiel xvii. 22, 23.) That it was strong and lasted well, Isaiah tells us (ix. 10); its sweet smell is spoken of (Song of Solomon iv. 11): its beauty and the spreading of its branches, are alluded to in Psa. lxxx. 10, 11. The cedars of Lebanon were planted by God, not man; and this is thus told us in His Holy Word: “The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon which He hath planted.” (Psa. civ. 16.) And the cedars are said to glorify God. (Psa. cxlviii. 9.) De-

stroying the cedars by storm shows also the power of God, for it is said,—“The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.” (Psalm xxix. 5.) Oh, what a voice that must be, dear children, when it can make these majestic trees to shake and break with its power. The destruction of cedars was also threatened as a punishment for sin by God (Jer. xxii. 7).

Cedars were also compared with several things in the Bible: ungodly rulers, in their pride, with lofty cedars (Isa. ii. 13; x. 33, 34): the Assyrian and Amorite nations also, with fine and powerful cedar trees (see Ezek. xxxi. 3. Amos ii. 9). The glory of Israel, whom God had blessed, was, by the wicked prophet Balaam, compared with cedar trees beside the waters (Numb. xxiv. 6.) The righteous are like cedar trees; for we read,—“The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar of Lebanon.” (Psalm xcii. 12.) Of the glory and beauty of Jesus, it is said,—“His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.” (Song of Solomon v. 15. Ezek. xvii. 22, 23.)

I have not told you all about the cedar; but enough, I hope, to interest and make you wish to study more about this beautiful and sacred tree, which must ever be so interesting to everyone who loves God, and who takes an interest

in His long lost, sinning, and despised people,  
the Jews.

### THE APPLE TREE.

I ~~HARDLY~~ need tell you much about the appearance of this tree. I do not doubt that you all know its beautiful pink and white blossoms, in the spring, and its rosy, or golden-coloured fruit, in the autumn.

Once there were only crab-trees in England,—that is, small wild trees, bearing a little sour fruit hardly fit to eat; but at length, by what is called grafting,—about which I will tell you presently, when I speak of the olive tree,—the once almost useless crab-trees came to bear beautiful apples. England is celebrated now for its apple-orchards, and has been so for some hundreds of years. This tree was first brought from Persia. In the time of the Saxons, when King Edgar was crowned, there was a prayer for his prosperity and happiness, in which God is especially asked to grant his kingdom abundance of apples: I suppose, because so many people depended upon them for their living.

The apple tree is three or four times mentioned in the Bible:—Joel speaks of it, as withered up, among many other trees, in the time of famine (Joel i. 12); Solomon says,—

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. xxv. 11): this means that good advice is like a valuable ornament in the form of an apple. Two or three times the apple tree is spoken of in the Song of Solomon. The most beautiful verse is that in which the Bride, or Church of Jesus, speaks of Him thus : — "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." (Song of Sol. ii. 3) In many parts of Palestine the apple tree still flourishes; and Askelon, once a town of the Philistines, is still much celebrated for its beautiful and fragrant smelling apples.

### THE BOX TREE.

THE box tree is an evergreen, once much prized in England as an ornament in gardens. Branches of it were used to adorn houses on the feast of Candlemas; but this custom has past away. In some parts of England, mourners drop pieces of the box tree into the graves of their friends. Being an evergreen, it is a fit emblem of the soul, which ever lives, either in happiness or misery, after the body has died.

The wood of this tree is very useful: it can be highly polished; it is hard, smooth, and of a yellowish colour. It is used for many things;



but is most valued for what are called wood-engravings. It is twice mentioned in the Bible; both times in Isaiah, among a list of beautiful trees. I remember, when I was a little girl, I was told to find the answer to this question,—“Tell me of a verse where *seven* beautiful trees are mentioned together?” Diligently I searched for the verse, and ever afterwards remembered it; and now I will tell it to you:—“I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together.” (Isa. xli. 19.) This glorious time is to be when Jesus shall come to restore the Jews, and bring peace upon the earth. And, again, of that glorious time it is written,—“The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.” (Isa. xl. 13.)

#### THE KHARÛB OR HUSK TREE.

THIS is an evergreen, not unlike an apple tree in size and shape. Its fruit is a kind of long pod, or bean, which when quite ripe is soft, and gummy in taste. It is used as food for pigs in many parts of the East, as in Cyprus, where it grows in great quantities. In parts of Syria, where there are not many pigs, it is made into

a kind of treacle. This is the tree which is mentioned in the parable of the prodigal son, who was sent into the fields to feed swine, and who "would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat." (Luke xv.)

This tree is sometimes called the locust tree, as well as the kharûb.

### THE MYRTLE TREE

THIS is also a pretty evergreen tree, bearing a small white flower. It is a great favourite in England; but will not always live out of doors during winter, for its native home is a warmer country. I have already told you of one verse in which the myrtle is mentioned among the beautiful trees of the Bible. It is again mentioned by the prophet Isaiah, in that time when the earth shall be beautified, and freed from sin; when "instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree." (Isaiah lv. 13) In a vision of the prophet Zechariah, he saw many myrtle trees. (Zech. i. 8.) Myrtle branches were used in one of the feasts of the Jews, called the Feast of Tabernacles; during which feast, they were to make booths, or tents, of the branches of different trees, and live in them for seven days. In Nehemiah, we hear of his restoring this feast after the return of two of the tribes from captivity. (Neh. viii. 15.)

## THE FIG TREE.

THE fig has always been a great favourite among the southern nations of Europe, and the East. It is a large tree, with immense smooth looking leaves. The fruit is oval shaped, soft and juicy, very nourishing, sweet and wholesome. The figs grow on the branches or bark of the tree. Many fig trees have three crops of figs during the year; and in most cases the fruit comes *before* the leaves, instead of after, as on other trees. Perhaps you remember how one day when Jesus was feeling hungry,—He saw “a fig tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only.” This fig tree was a barren one, so Jesus pronounced a curse upon it, saying,—“Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.” (Matt. xxi. 19.)

All fig trees have a kind of oily substance inside them, which nourishes and makes them fruitful: if there was not plenty of this sap, the tree would become unfruitful. There was a parable of a barren fig tree, spoken by Jesus. It was this: “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard: and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And

he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." (Luke xiii. 6—9.)

Now there are some very important lessons, dear children, to be learnt from this parable. The fig tree was, you see, planted among vines. It was a tree unlike the others in the vineyard. The owner of the vineyard is God: the vineyard is His Church; the trees, those who call themselves Christians. The vine-dresser is the Saviour, who pleads with God to spare sinners a little longer, when they are not bringing forth the fruits of righteousness.

I have often told you, dear children, that to be a Christian only in name, will do no good. God expects *fruits*, or works of faith, otherwise there is no real faith in Jesus Christ, as there ought to be. It is not enough to say you believe in God: the devils believe, but they do not show their faith to be a right one. You all have a work to do for God; and year after year God bears with sinners. Some He calls to Himself, by sending them trouble; to others He sends a deep repentance, and stings of conscience, which rouses them out of their barrenness. But with others, again, all God's calls are of no use, and they are cut down as worthless, to be burned.

It is a curious fact that fig trees require very careful attendance to make them fruitful. Their roots must be dug about well, all the stones picked from them, and manure, or what will nourish them, must be abundantly supplied. If, after all this has been done for three years, and the fig tree does not bear fruit, it is then considered barren, and cut down. By this you will see the meaning of the parable, and why the vinedresser wished to do all this before the tree was cut down.

The wood of the fig tree is considered valuable. It is rather soft, but it lasts long. It was for this reason the Egyptians used it so much for making coffins for embalmed bodies. Perhaps you do not know what "embalming" means: it is something which is done to the dead bodies of persons, to keep them from decaying, or being destroyed by worms when they are buried. The Egyptians believed that if they thus preserved the body, the soul or spirit would still remain in it, and would be safe and happy. This, you know, dear children, is not the truth of God's Word. It matters little what becomes of our poor worthless bodies; for when death comes, the soul and body are parted at once, and will not again be united until God raises up the Saints in a new and glorious body. Even Job knew this beautiful truth, when, in his great

sorrow, he, thousands of years ago, said these words,—“ I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth ; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.” (Job xix. 25, 26.)

Perhaps you will remember that the bodies of Jacob and Joseph were embalmed in Egypt, because they died there, and it was the custom, and because their bodies had a long way to travel before they reached their burial place, in the land of Canaan. But these holy men knew well the glorious truth of the resurrection, and feared not the thought of their bodies mouldering in the grave.

Egypt and Canaan were celebrated for fig trees, and in these lands they still grow. (Psalm cv. 33. Num. xiii 23. Deut viii 8.) There are still fig trees on the Mount of Olives ; and Bethphage, a village mentioned in the New Testament, means “ the house of figs ; ” though, no doubt, the few fig trees near that village now are only small remains of the numbers which once grew so abundantly.

The bursting out of the tender green of the fig tree was a sign of summer. To this Jesus refers the Jews, that, as they looked for the coming of summer from the early leaves, so, when they saw signs of war and trouble of which He had

told them, they might know that His word was coming to pass. (Matthew xxiv. 32. Song of Sol. ii. 11—13.)

Figs were not only eaten fresh, but dried and made into cakes; perhaps something in the manner we now see them brought to England. We read of dried figs used thus, two or three times, and also of their being sent as presents. (P Sam. xxx. 12; xxv. 18. 1 Chron. xii. 40.) They were sold in Jewish markets, and the prophet Nehemiah found some of the Jews doing this even on the Sabbath day. (Neh. xiii. 15.) The fruit was also sometimes kept in baskets. Jeremiah saw in a vision two baskets of figs, one very good, like the first ripe crop, which were esteemed more than the other crops, and one basket of very bad figs. These two kinds were to represent the obedient and disobedient Jews. (Jer. xxiv. 1—8.)

The failure or destruction of fig trees and their fruit was regarded as a great trouble, and God sent this punishment sometimes for sin. There is, however, a beautiful prayer of faith, written by the prophet Habakkuk, in which he expresses his firm trust in God, in famine and trouble. He says,—“Although the *fig tree* shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off

from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will joy in the God of my salvation." (Hab. iii. 17.) God also sometimes threatened to send enemies upon the Jews, who should eat up the fruit of their trees. (Jer. v. 17.) And locusts also were sent, who ate the bark as well as the leaves and fruit. (Joel i. 4, 7, 12. Amos iv. 9.)

The idea of peace is beautifully shown by some verses in the Bible. In the days of Solomon, whose wisdom and greatness made all his enemies afraid to attack him, there was a rest and quietness to Israel, such as they had never enjoyed before, for it is said,—“Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine, and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba.” (1 Kings iv. 25.) These towns were at the north and south ends of Palestine; so that it means all was rest and peace, and people could sit under the cool shade of their trees without fear of war, or their enemies. A time is yet to come when once again the Saviour has promised a holy peace to the world. When He, a greater king than Solomon, shall reign, then shall come that happy time when every man shall sit under his vine and fig tree, “and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.” (Micah iv. 4)

One of the disciples of Jesus was sitting under



the shade of a fig tree when his Lord and Master first saw him, and looking into his heart He knew an "Israelite indeed in whom was no guile." Guile is deceit. Oh, dear children, what a blessed thing was this to have said of him ; and by the Saviour too, who knew the secrets of all hearts ! Would it could be said of you, dear ones, as of Nathaniel, that you have "no guile ;" but alas, your own hearts must tell you how many evil thoughts you have in them, and how many evil passions you show. Oh ! pray that the guile may be taken away from you, and that you may go to meet Jesus as Nathaniel did ; confess His faith, become His disciple, and follow Him manfully.

There is one miracle more I must not forget to mention about the fig tree, before I close. Do you remember the good king Hezekiah, of Judah, who became so ill that he was about to die. But he prayed most earnestly that he might recover. God heard his prayer, and added to his life fifteen years. He was cured by a plaster of figs being laid upon the boil, by command of the prophet Isaiah. (2 Kings xx. 7. Isa. xxxviii. 21.) But the chapter about the figs would not be complete either, if I forgot to remind you once more of what you know so well, of the first mention of the fig tree in the Bible ; which, indeed, is the first tree mentioned by name, except the tree of

knowledge of good and evil, which was forbidden to be eaten. The large smooth leaves of the fig tree Adam and Eve sewed together, and made themselves aprons to hide their shame. (Gen. iii. 7.) They had indeed fallen low, when even leaves, which fade and die, were thought sufficient to hide them from that eye of God which seeth all things. You have been taught, I doubt not, that hymn of Dr. Watts', which always made me feel God's eye upon me when I was a child; and the words still often come into my mind, and I hope check sinful thoughts and actions sometimes.

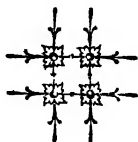
“Almighty God, Thy piercing eye  
Strikes through the shades of night,  
And our most secret actions lie  
All open to Thy sight.

“There's not a sin that we commit,  
Nor wicked word we say,  
But in God's dreadful book 'tis writ,  
Against the judgment day.

“Lord, at Thy feet ashamed I lie,  
Upward I dare not look:  
Pardon my sins before I die,  
And blot them from Thy book.”

I hope that this, dear children, will ever be

your prayer, and then you need not fear, with sins washed in the blood of Jesus, to stand before the judgment throne; for you will know that though your sins have been many, they are forgiven, and your names written in the book of life.



# Trees.

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## PART IV.

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### THE TEIL TREE

THERE are various opinions as to what is meant by the teil tree,—mentioned but once I believe in the Bible. By some it was supposed to be the lime, or linden tree ; one of the largest and most graceful trees of the forest, and once so much cultivated by the Jews. The wood was almost as useful as that of the oak ; while its flowers were delightful food for bees.

Other people, again, think the teil tree is the terebinth,—which is not unlike the oak, and which grows in Palestine. It has feathering, sharp-pointed leaves and small flowers, which afterwards turn to clusters of berries, something like grapes. It is supposed that in many places where the oak is mentioned in the Bible, the terebinth is meant. The terebinth lives to a great age ; and before its trunk becomes rotten, there is said to rise from its roots a new shoot, or young tree, which grows up in the place of the

old one. This is thought to be the meaning of Isaiah, when he speaks of a small number who shall be saved from the great destruction of the Jews. He says,—They shall be “as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves : so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.”

#### THE MULBERRY OR SYCAMINE TREE.

THERE are two kinds of mulberry trees in Palestine : the one called the white, the other the black mulberry. It is a most useful tree, and



David and his army waiting for the rustling among the mulberry trees

its leaves are the chief food of silkworms. The black mulberry is often planted in the courts of houses. Its fruit is pleasant and cooling, and, mingled with water and violets, is often drunk by the natives. Once when the Philistines came up to fight against David, he was near a grove of mulberry trees with his army, and God told him, to stand near the grove, "and let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the Lord go out before thee to smite the host of the Philistines." (2 Sam. v. 23, 24. 1 Chron. xiv. 14)

Thus, you see, the breeze rustling amongst the leaves of the trees, was made the sign of a victory in battle. The sycamine tree is once spoken of in the New Testament, in a lesson of faith taught by Jesus. (Luke xvii. 5)

#### THE FIR AND THE PINE. .

THERE are several different kinds of fir trees; all more or less handsome, with their graceful feathery branches, and dark evergreen foliage. The pine is the most beautiful of the fir trees. Perhaps you have seen pine woods, and noticed how beautifully in winter the dark sombre green, and hanging branches of the trees, contrast with the snow-covered ground around.

The wood or timber of fir trees is called deal,

and is more frequently used than any other wood, being less expensive. Almost all common things are made of deal. The masts of ships, are the stems of fir trees, which grow very tall and straight. From the sap of the pine tree various things are made,—such as tar, pitch, turpentine, rosin, etc. There are many kinds of pine tree growing upon the mountains of Lebanon and Hermon. The cones of these pines contain pine-nuts, which, when gathered ripe, and dried, are much used in cooking. Some people think these pine cones were the myrrh, in which the Ishmaelites who bought Joseph, traded.\*

The pine tree is mentioned two or three times in the Bible ; and the fir tree is very frequently alluded to. Pine branches were used at the Feast of Tabernacles, kept in Nehemiah's time : and both the pine and the fir are among the beautiful trees which are to be planted at some future time in the desert ;—and they are also to adorn the new Sanctuary, or House of God, when Jesus shall come the second time. (Isaiah lx. 13.) A great deal of fir timber was used, as well as cedar, in the building of Solomon's Temple : Hiram, king of Tyre, sending the wood in floats down the sea. The floors and two doors of the

\* See "The Land and the Book," page 511.

temple were all of fir wood. (See 1 Kings, v. vi. Cant. i. 17.)

When a wicked king of Assyria once invaded Israel, he threatened to cut down the cedars of Lebanon, and the tall fir trees of Israel. (2 Kings xix. 23. Is. xxxvii. 24.) And when the enemies of Israel were destroyed, the fir trees and cedars are described as rejoicing. (Is. xiv. 8.) Fir trees were often a refuge for the stork to build her nest in. (See Psa. civ. 17.) Of the wood of the fir, instruments of music were made; on which David and his people played when they fetched the ark from Kirjath-jearim. (2 Samuel vi. 5.) The ship-boards of Tyre, in her glory, were made of fir wood; the masts of cedar, and the oars of the strong oak. (See Eze. xxvii. 5, 6.)

When fir trees were green and healthy, they yielded much fruit: with these Ephraim, when sorry for his sins, was compared. (Hosea xiv. 8.) When the destruction of Jerusalem is spoken of by Zechariah, the fir tree is told to howl; which of course is what is called figurative language: as again, in the destruction of Nineveh, Nahum says,—the “fir trees shall be terribly shaken.” (Nahum ii. 3) This meant how all should be changed, and seem to shake as if afraid: so dreadful should be God’s judgments.

I think I have now told you nearly all that is mentioned in the Bible about the fir tree.



## THE OAK.

PERHAPS there is no tree so dear to English hearts as the oak. Who has not heard of the British oak, from which the splendid men-of-war are made; and the sailors of those ships, who are said to have hearts as firm and strong as the giant oak itself?

I might almost write a separate book about the value and use of the oak; but I must not say much of it here. Every part of the tree is valuable. The wood is chiefly used in England for ship-building; and to build a moderate-sized man-of-war, it takes 2,000 trees. When Tyre was in her glory, she used oars of oak. The bark of the tree is valuable for tanning and dyeing.

Do you remember anything about a tanner in the Bible? There was one Simon a tanner, who lived at Joppa, and at whose house Simon Peter lodged, when he had that remarkable vision, which showed him that from that time the Gentiles were to have Gospel privileges as well as the Jews. The sawdust and ashes of the oak are very useful also: and the roots are made into handles for knives, hammers, and such things. The fruit of the oak is called an acorn; and in former times the ancient people of Britain used it for food;—now it is chiefly valued as food for pigs: for which it is very wholesome.

Oaks live to a great age. There is an aged oak still standing near Hebron, which is by many believed to be the tree under which Abraham brought the food to the angels, who came to tell him of God's promise of a son. Whether this be true or not, I cannot tell you, though it is still called "Abraham's oak."

Oaks are the largest and grandest trees in Palestine; and there are still remaining forests of them, extending many miles. The oaks of Bashan are often mentioned in the Bible, as very grand and majestic.

I have told you before how often idolatries were committed under trees which were regarded as sacred. Now no tree was held so sacred as the oak in Palestine; and it is within oaks chiefly that spirits are supposed to dwell. People used formerly to choose high places, as well as groves, for idolatry, that they might be seen from a distance. There is still on the top of the mountain of Lebanon, a mound for worship, and a grove of oaks near it (Isaiah lvii. 5., marg.) Isaiah prophecies, however, of a time when idolators shall be ashamed of the oaks they have desired: and when the wicked shall fade as an oak leaf fades in autumn time. (Isaiah i 29, 30.) There are many verses where idolatries under oaks are especially spoken about, which you may look out for yourselves. (Eze. vi. 13. Hos. iv. 13.)

Under an oak idols were once buried by Jacob, at Shechem, when he found some of his people were worshipping them. (Gen. xxxv. 4.) A few verses further on, we read of Deborah, Rachel's nurse, dying, and being buried under an oak, which was afterwards called "the oak of weeping:" (v. 8). Saul and his sons too were buried under an oak near Jabesh Gilead, after they had been slain on mount Gilboa. (1 Chron. x. 12.) An angel who appeared to Gideon to tell him he was to deliver Israel from their enemies, sat down under an oak. (Jud. vi. 11, 19.) The disobedient prophet was found sitting under an oak, by the wicked old prophet who tempted him back to Bethel, when God had forbidden him to return. (1 Kings xiii. 14.)

When God made a covenant with the Israelites under Joshua, the words of the law were written in a book, and a great stone was set up under an oak, by Joshua, in token of the agreement. (Joshua xxiv. 26.)

The oak was used as a sign of various things. In Isa. vi. 13, it was to represent the Church, or holy people. Strong but wicked rulers were compared with "oaks of Bashan." (Isa. ii. 13. Zech. xi. 2.) The strength of the Amorite was compared with the oaks. (Amos ii. 9.) But I must not forget to remind you of Absalom, that disobedient son of David, who rebelled against his

father and tried to make himself king. His hair, which was beautiful, and of which he was so proud, was the means of his destruction. A battle was fought, between Absalom's friends and his father David's friends, in which Absalom was obliged to fly away on a mule. As he



Death of Absalom

passed under the boughs of a thick oak, his long flowing hair was caught in the branches; the mule went away from under him, and he was left hanging there; where he was soon found, and killed by his cousin Joab. You see the very thing he loved so much hastened his death.

And it often happens that what we prize too much is made the cause of pain and trouble to us. What a sad warning is Absalom to all wicked children. Slain in rebellion against his own father! He was buried in the tomb he had built near Jerusalem, and which is still standing, and bears his name. The Jewish parents bring their children to this tomb, tell them of Absalom's sin, and then teach them to spit upon it and throw stones at the building. This is foolish, because the tomb has not done wrong; and if the bones of Absalom are really inside, they have no feeling, and no good can be gained by abusing them. But I hope you, dear young readers, will not forget to learn a lesson from the heavy punishment of a disobedient son, and remember the Fifth Commandment, which enjoins all children to honor and obey their parents.

#### THE SYCAMORE TREE.

THIS Bible tree is not what we call the sycamore in England, but a large tree which bears a kind of common fig, of a yellowish green colour. It is a noble-looking tree, with wide-spreading branches. It grows very plentifully in the valleys where it is warm and sunny, but a severe frost will sometimes kill it. It is said in one of the Psalms, that God "destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamores with frost." (Psa. lxxviii. 47.)

The sycamore wood is not thought much of in Palestine. When Solomon was king of Israel, we are told "the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance." (1 Kings x. 27.) They were, however, grown in the king's land with the olives, and a man appointed to look over them. (1 Chron. xxvii. 27.) The pride of Ephraim was spoken of by Isaiah, and he says they boasted that though the sycamores were cut down they would change them into cedars. (Isa ix. 10) The figs which the sycamore produces are not very pleasant in taste, and are only eaten by the very poor people. To be a gatherer of sycamore fruit is considered a low business, and only very poor persons are employed in it. Amos the prophet was a gatherer of sycamore fruit, and he told king Amaziah this as an excuse for his roughness of language. (Amos vii. 14)

Sycamore trees were generally planted by the way-side. I dare say you remember the account of Zacchæus the publican, who was a very little man. He wanted to see Jesus, but could not for the multitude of people: so he ran before, and climbed into a sycamore tree. Jesus who knew all things, knew that he was there, and as He passed, He looked up, and called to Zacchæus to make haste and come down, for He would

that day stay at his house. Very gladly Zacchæus obeyed, and received the Saviour; and on that day we are told salvation came to his house, because he believed in Jesus, and became a convert. Oh, that each and all of you, dear children, would receive Jesus into your hearts as willingly as Zacchæus received Him. You cannot now have Jesus as your guest in His human form, as Zacchæus had, but you can receive Him into your hearts just the same as he did. Jesus only waits to be asked. He says,—“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come unto him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” (Rev. iii. 20.) The door at which Jesus knocks is your heart. He waits to be asked to come in. Oh! do not keep Him standing there. Receive Him now, while He is waiting to be gracious, lest He should leave that door—so long closed against Him.

#### THE WILLOW TREE.

THERE are many different kinds of these graceful trees, which generally grow by the water-side. The one we perhaps know best is the weeping willow; which droops so gracefully down, its long feathery leaves sweeping the ground. The branches of the willow are most useful for making baskets: they were long ago

much used by the Druids of Great Britain,—who did not, however, make their baskets for the same purpose that we do in the present day: they sometimes wove enormous cages of willow boughs, in which they put their prisoners of war, as victims for sacrifice; to these huge baskets they set fire, and burned the poor creatures in their willow prisons. The ancient Britons were famous for their skill in wicker-work; and they even made boats of wicker which they used on the sea. The wood of the willow, as well as the branches, is very useful for many things. It has been for some hundreds of years considered a mourning tree, except by the Persian and Arabian nations, who value it much, and regard it as an emblem of happiness, and make from its flowers a very sweet perfume. Once the Jews used it also in their joyful Feast of Tabernacles (see Leviticus xxiii. 40—42); but afterwards, when carried captive far away from their own bright land, we read,—“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down: yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon *the willows* in the midst thereof.” (Psalm cxxxvii. 1, 2.) The rivers of Babylon mean the waters of the river Euphrates, which once flowed quite through the middle of that great city. But Babylon is now no more. For ages even the site of the city was unknown, though



her mighty river still flowed along; and even to this day its banks are adorned with 'graceful' willow trees, reminding travellers of the poor captive Jews whose harps were hung upon them. Perhaps you have heard of the curious expression,—“Wearing the willow.” People in sadness sometimes wore willows formerly, to show their sorrow; and often willow trees were planted over graves: so that “wearing the willow” meant wearing signs of trouble. Job speaks of the behemoth being compassed about by the “willows of the brook” (Job xl. 22.) Isaiah twice speaks of the willow,—first, in chap. xv. 7, and again xlv. 4; in which verse God says of His people,—“They shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.” The willow grows very quickly, and is therefore a very proper tree to be compared with the rapid growth of the righteous. The last verse in which the willow is mentioned, is in Ezekiel xvii. 5, in which, in a parable, Israel is compared with a willow planted by the waters.

#### THE ~~SHITTIM~~ TAH OR SHITTIM TREE.

THIS tree is generally thought to mean the acacia tree, which grows so beautifully in the deserts of Arabia, and of which it is by far the largest and most handsome tree. The wood is hard, fine, and beautiful: the bark is thorny,

and, in the Hebrew language, is called "*shata*,"—which signifies to turn to and fro, and perhaps means that animals turn from it on account of its thorns. It has bunches of sweet, yellow, hanging flowers. There is a valley called the Vale of Shittim, which is referred to by Joel, when speaking of the latter days, and the glories which shall then take place:—"It shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of *Shittim*." (Joel iii. 18.) There was a plain in Moab called Abel Shittim, in which the children of Israel were abiding when, from the mountains near, Balak brought Balaam to curse them. It was supposed this vale was so-called from the groves of acacia trees which grew there, and among which the tents of the children of Israel were lying, when the wicked prophet looked down upon them, wishing to curse them. (Micah vi. 5.) When the tabernacle was to be set up in the wilderness, among the list of things given to Moses to prepare for it was shittim wood.\* (Exodus xxv. 5.) The ark,—that holy chest, or box, in which were kept

\* The burning bush, which Moses saw on Horeb, is generally supposed to have been a shittah tree.

things to remind the Israelites of God, and on the top of which was a seat called the 'mercy-seat, guarded by two cherubims, or angel-figures, —was to be made of shittim wood, overlaid with pure gold. On this mercy-seat the glory of God appeared in a cloud, when He descended to talk to Moses, which glory also filled the tabernacle. The table on which was kept the showbread was to be made of shittim wood, as well as staves for it; and the boards of the tabernacle were of shittim wood, overlaid with pure gold. The shittah being a tree of the desert, God most likely chose it for the tabernacle, because the Israelites could readily get it; for being strangers and wanderers, who had as yet no settled home, they were unable to procure for themselves more valuable material. Thus God graciously remembered their need; and it was not until long after their entrance into the promised land, that the more costly wood of cedar was employed in the work of the new house which God commanded Solomon to build.

#### THE POMEGRANATE TREE.

THE pomegranate is not a very large tree; but it is thick and thorny. The fruit somewhat resembles apples on the outside, though not the same colour. The flowers are of a beautiful and rich crimson, and look very gay when in

full bloom. The fruit of the pomegranate has always been much liked, and is sweet and refreshing. We do not often see it in England, though sometimes it is sold in fruiterers' shops. The tree grows well in Egypt; and it was one of the fruits for which the Israelites murmured in the wilderness. (Numbers. xx. 5.) Canaan was a land of pomegranates; and they were among the fruits which the twelve spies brought with them, when they returned from searching the land (Numbers xiii. 23); and Moses reminded them of this, in one of his addresses to them. (Deuteron. viii. 8.) There were orchards of pomegranates in Solomon's time, and wine, which was drunk mixed with spices, was made from them. (Song of Sol. iv. 13; viii. 2)

Sometimes the trees grew so thick, as to be a pleasant shade, and in the hot season people lived under them. Even Saul, when king of Israel, remained under one for some time, when in Gibeah: (1 Samuel xiv. 2.) When the pomegranates were blasted and withered, it was considered a great trouble (Joel i. 12): but when God promises to bless His people by the mouth of the prophet Haggai (ii. 19), He gives His word to make the fruit trees yield abundantly. On the splendid robe of the High Priest, there were figures of pomegranates, worked in blue, purple, scarlet, and twined linen. (Ex. xxxix. 24.)

The two pillars of the Temple of Solomon, to which he gave the names of Jachin and Boaz,\* had pomegranates of brass,—two hundred rows of them; which must have looked very grand and massive. (1 Kings vii. 18—20.)

The Church of Jesus Christ is compared with an orchard of pomegranates (Song of Solomon iv. 13); and the holy people with their beauty (iv. 3.) In this Song of Solomon there are many allusions to pomegranates, from which we learn how much the fruit was esteemed for its beauty, richness, and sweetness.

#### THE OLIVE OR OIL TREE.

I HAVE mentioned I believe every tree of the Bible except two,—the olive or oil tree, and the palm. But, perhaps, of all trees in that Holy book, none are mentioned so often, or in such glowing and beautiful terms.

The olive is a tree of silvery-looking foliage, which makes it in the distance have somewhat the appearance of a willow. It is not a lofty or grand looking tree, but one which, in its usefulness to man, must be considered amongst the first. Wherever the olive grows the country is rich around; and there *was* a time when Palestine abounded in olive yards. There

\* Jachin means, "He shall establish;" Boaz, "In it is strength."

are still many grown, but few in comparison with the time of old. The olive is curious in the manner in which its roots strike out, until they find a refuge on rocky soil: it is said that the olive languishes, or dies, if it cannot rest its roots on a rock. Dear children, there is a Rock on which I trust you will all rest,—I mean that spiritual Rock, which is Jesus Christ: if you do not rest your soul on Him, you must in the end droop and die,—as the olive does without its rock of stone. Oh, then, put your trust in the Rock of Ages, which endureth for ever!

The olive grows on hills, though not very high ones: so many grew on a mountain near Jerusalem, that it was called the Mount of Olives, of which I hope to tell you some future time. There is no tree which bears so many flowers as the olive; but it shakes off hundreds which are useless, and which would never form into berries, from which the valuable olive oil is extracted.

Eliphaz, Job's friend, says of those who trust in foolish and vain things,—he “shall cast off his flower as the olive.” (Job xv. 33) The olive is a slow tree in growing: it is *seven* years before it yields berries, and *ten* or *fifteen* more before the fruit is really good; but when once it does so, it goes on for hundreds of years, bearing fruit. We may compare this with people

who are often years before the world can tell whether they are true believers in Jesus Christ, seeing they do not openly show their good fruit, but who in the end become earnest workers, and bring forth much fruit to God's glory. When an olive once becomes fruitful it requires little care, and will, even when neglected, go on yielding fruit year after year. So, the true followers of the Saviour, though wicked people hate, despise, and neglect them, will still go on, bringing forth more fruit, year after year, when all seems against them.

In Palestine the people would hardly know what to do without the olive: they use the oil for cooking and for lighting their lamps, while the berry is common food, eaten with bread. You may believe then, what a sad thing it was for the olive tree not to yield its fruit, or to be blighted. (Habbak. iii. 18.) Olive trees were among the things promised by God in the good land, to which the Israelites were journeying through the wilderness. (Deut. vi. 11; viii. 8.)

In the parable of the trees, of which I have told you before, the olive is made to say, "Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?" (Judges ix. 9.) When a king of Assyria wanted to tempt the people of Judah away from Hezekiah, he promised to take them

to a land of "oil olives and honey." (2 Kings xviii. 32.) Solomon had a man not only as an overseer of the olive trees which were growing, but another over the cellars for the oil taken from the olive berries. (1 Chron. xxvii. 28.)

In former times the oil was beaten out of the berries, or crushed out between two stones: there was a command about this given to the Israelites (Deuteronomy xxiv. 20),—that when they gathered their olive berries they were to leave a small number for the poor people; just the same as they were to leave a small portion of wheat in their corn fields for those who had no corn of their own. When the fruit of the olive is ripe, the owners get into the tree and shake it with all their might, to make the berries fall to the ground. But there are always a few olives left after the shaking, and these are for the poor people. The shaking of the olive tree, and the few berries left on the branches, is twice spoken of by Isaiah; who compares the few berries left with the small number of those among the Jews, who should still cleave to God, when the rest had become idolators: he says,—“Yet gleanings shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree: two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the Lord



God of Israel." (Isa. xvii. 6.) And again, when the land had become so wicked, he says,—  
 "When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea." (Isa. xxiv. 13, 14.)

Every seventh year the fruit of the olive was not to be gathered by the owners, but left entirely for the poor people. (Exod. xxiii. 11.) This was in the time of Moses; now this law is not attended to, and only the gleaning is left for them.

The fruit of the olive is pressed between stone mills, to bring out the oil. Once it was trodden out by the feet of men; this is spoken of by the prophets Micah (vi. 15), and Haggai (ii. 16). The two cherubims, or angel figures, in Solomon's Temple, were made of olive wood, also the doors and posts of the temple. (1 Kings vi. 23, 30—33.) Olive wood is not, however, so much used as cedar or fir. Branches of olives were carried at the Feast of Tabernacles. Ever since the time that Noah's dove brought an olive leaf in her mouth, after the flood, the olive branch has been considered an emblem, or sign, of peace; because the dove finding the olive leaf, showed

that God had made the waters to cease, and His anger was turned from man. Doves are still very fond of olive trees, and build their nests in them.

The Jewish people were compared by God with "a green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit" (Jer. xi. 16): the Word of God and Jesus Christ are compared with olive trees, by Zech. iv. 3—12; the righteous also, by David, with green olive trees (Psalm lii. 8); and, again, with the beauty of the olive, by Hosea (xiv. 6). The two witnesses for God's truth are compared with two olive trees, standing before God. (Revelation xi. 3, 4.) Then in Psalm cxxiii., we have a beautiful verse, representing the *children* of the righteous man as "olive branches round about his table." Very often olive trees are seen growing, with small young shoots rising up all round them, seeming to support the parent tree. This is what good children ought to be: giving help and comfort, and keeping near their dear parents, affording them all the assistance they can.

There are two kinds of olives,—one wild, the other cultivated. The wild olive cannot bear fruit of itself: it must be grafted to make it fruitful. To graft, is to take a young and strong shoot from a good fruit-bearing tree, and fasten it securely into the stock, or trunk of another tree of the same kind, which either is unfruitful or does not produce good fruit. Therefore, to make

a wild olive tree bear fruit, the shoot of a good olive must be grafted into it.

Now I want to explain to you something St. Paul says to the Gentiles, when he compares them with a wild olive tree. First, listen to the verses: "If some of the branches be broken off, ~~and~~ thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, ~~and~~ with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Rom. xi. 17—24.)

Now you remember, I am sure, how Abraham,

the father of the Jews, was blessed by God, and how God chose his descendants to be His people: how they were afterwards called Israelites, from Jacob, whose other name was Israel; and then again, Jews, from Judæa, a part of the land of Palestine. You know how good God was to them,—how He took the land from the Canaanites, and gave it to them: how He gave them His law, and dwelt among them; while *the Gentiles* (who are all the people who are not Jews) were not granted the privileges of the Jews. You know, too, how the Jews rebelled, time after time: how they murmured, and became idolaters,—and how long God bore with them, until at last, He took their blessing from them, and gave it to the Gentiles, while the Jews now wander about among all the Gentile nations, despised and hated. The Jew, then, was once the good olive tree, of which St. Paul speaks,—the Gentiles, the wild one. Now I told you that, in grafting, it must be the *good* tree which must be put into the unfruitful one; but in the case of the Jew and Gentile, it was the *wild* tree which was put into the stock of the good. That means, the Jews had the true knowledge,—the Gentiles had not; yet the Gentile was put into possession of the Jewish privileges. If this was done with natural fruit trees, the good tree would become wild like the graft; but, with God's

work, it is different. He can do a work of grace which cannot be done by nature ; and so He made the Gentiles, which were wild olive trees, to yield the fruits of righteousness, which the Jewish nation had left off yielding, to show His mighty power. All this St. Paul meant when he wrote the verses you have just read ; and I should like you to remember the warning he gives to the Gentiles, not to boast of their advantage over the now lost Jew, but to fear lest the same privileges should be taken from them, if they do not make a better use of them than did the Jews.

Take care, dear children, you do not neglect the great Redeemer, whom the Jews crucified and rejected. Remember that in every sin you commit you are crucifying the Saviour again,—you are wounding and grieving Him. Oh ! be not like the Jews, but love Him and cling to His cross evermore.

There is a beautiful hymn, written by one who loved the Jews, which I will place for you here, as I am sure you will like it :—

#### JERUSALEM.

“ Jerusalem, Jerusalem ! enthroned once on high,—  
 Thou favoured home of God on earth,—thou heaven below the sky !  
 Now brought to bondage by thy sons,—a curse and grief to see,  
 Jerusalem ! Jerusalem ! our tears shall flow for thee.

"Oh! hadst thou known thy day of grace, and flocked beneath the wings

Of Him who called thee lovingly,—thine own anointed King;  
Then had the tribes of all the earth gone up thy pomp to see,  
And glory dwelt within thy gates, and all thy sons were free,

"And who art thou that mournest me?' replied the ruin grey;  
'And fearest not rather that *thyself* may prove a castaway?  
I am a dried and abject branch,—*my* place is given to thee,  
But woe to every barren graft of thy wild olive tree!

"Our day of grace is sunk in night, our time of mercy spent,—  
For heavy was my childrens crime, and strange their punishment,  
Yet gaze not idly on our fall, but, sinner, warned be,—  
Who spared not His chosen seed, may send His wrath on thee.

"Our day of grace is sunk in night,—*thy* noon is in its prime  
Oh! turn and seek thy Saviour's face, in this accepted time.  
So, Gentile, let Jerusalem a lesson prove to thee,—  
And in the new Jerusalem, thy home for ever be."

Bishop Heber.

## THE PALM TREE

THE tree called the palm tree in England is not the least like the splendid, graceful tree of the East, which has been called the "prince of the vegetable kingdom." There are more than a thousand different kinds of palm trees,—all useful as well as beautiful. That spoken of in the Bible is the date-palm, on which the fruit called the date grows in rich clusters. Dates are eaten in great quantities in Egypt, Arabia, etc., where they grow; and indeed they form almost the principal part of the food of certain tribes.

The palm is not a tree of the hills, but of the valleys and deserts. Once the Holy Land abounded in palm-groves. Jericho was called the city of palm trees : and, in Joshua's time, there was near it a forest of these splendid trees, of eight miles long and three miles broad. Now there are few remaining, where once so many raised their majestic heads.

Bethany, the village where Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, lived, means "the house of dates;" and no doubt at that time there were many palm trees there; for we read, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, riding upon an ass, the multitude cut down branches of palm trees and strewed them in the way (John xii. 13), while they shouted, "Hosanna! blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." There are still in many other parts of Palestine, either solitary palms or groves of them. The finest grove is that at the foot of Mount Carmel. The countries of the Philistines and the Phœnicians were celebrated for palms; and Phœnicia means the land of palms.

Pilgrims in the Holy Land received the name of Palmers formerly, because they carried palm branches. There is a Sunday in the year called Palm Sunday: this is kept in remembrance of the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. In Rome there is a grand procession on that day among

the Roman Catholics, and they have branches of the palm, seven or eight feet long, carried in the procession. The Israelites used also to carry palm leaves at the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. xxiii. 40), and in Nehemiah's time they were used for making booths, or tents for the people to dwell in. (Nehem. viii. 15.)

Every part of the palm tree is of use. Its wood is most valuable : its leaves afford a pleasant shelter, and are also made by the Arabs into baskets. Its fruit I have told you about before ; but even the hard stone of the date is ground into powder, and serves as a coarse food for camels. From the shavings and fibres of the tree, a kind of sponge is made ; while from the sap, a spirit for drinking is procured.

Thus you see, dear children, the goodness of God in making this tree to live and thrive so well in the desert, where few things grow, and where the wild tribes, who do not know how to cultivate grain, can be so easily supplied with what they need.

The palm is slow in growing, but when once established and bearing fruit, it grows on for hundreds of years. Wind and storm, heat and cold, change it not. Nothing makes it grow crooked : its tall straight trunk, and feathery leaves, seem ever looking upwards toward heaven. This is indeed a fit emblem of the righteous,



and is so spoken of in the Psalms: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing." (Psalm xcii. 12—14.) And, again, the height of the palm tree is compared with the Church, by Solomon. (Song of Sol. vii. 7.)

It was the custom in olden times, to plant palm trees near palaces and temples. Solomon carved the walls of the house of God with cherubims and palm trees; and in the Holiest of Holies, where the Ark rested and God's glory descended, he carved on the doors cherubims and palm trees, and overlaid them with gold. Must they not have looked grand and magnificent? Jeremiah speaks of the idols of the heathen as upright as palm trees.

Joel speaks of the blasting of the palm tree as a great affliction. (Joel i. 12.) And you may imagine it would indeed be so, from the use it is to man. The first mention of palm trees is in Exodus xv. 27. When the Children of Israel were journeying from Egypt, soon after the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, "they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and three-score-and-ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters."

Think how refreshing and delightful it would be to sit in the hot, weary desert, and rest there; drink of the sweet waters, and talk to one another of all God's goodness and mercy to them. Often, in the land of Palestine, tents were erected under palm trees. Deborah,—that remarkable woman who judged Israel, and who was a warrior, prophetess, and poetess (for her song is poetry, though not in rhyme),—dwelt under a palm tree, between Ramah and Bethel. (Judg. iv. 5)

As the olive tree has so long been regarded as an emblem of peace, so has the palm tree been regarded as an emblem of victory. When St. John was in heaven, in one part of his glorious vision there, he tells us,—“After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, *and palms in their hands*; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” (Rev. vii 9, 10).

In heaven, Palms are carried by those who have won the victory, and gained the prize. What is the victory? The victory over sin, death, and Satan. “This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our FAITH”—says St. John, in one of his Epistles. That great

multitude of saved ones in heaven have fought "the good fight of faith," and gained the victory, because they believed in the blood of Jesus. They looked to Him to save them in their hour of need, and became "more than conquerors"

Dear children, I want you to overcome, and be hereafter among that multitude. I want you to have crowns of glory, and victors' palms. And you may have them,—for there are crowns and palms for all who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb! Oh, then, "look unto Him and be saved"



## QUESTIONS ON TREES.

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**Q.** Was Palestine celebrated for its trees?

**A.** Yes. • Once there were many immense forests in it.

**Q.** Are there many forests now?

**A.** No.

**Q.** What command was given to the Israelites about the fruits of their land?

**A.** For three years no fruit was to be gathered or eaten from the trees. The fruit of the fourth year was to be given to God; that of the fifth and other years they were to take for themselves.

**Q.** What were the rich to leave in gathering their fruits?

**A.** A few bunches or berries in each tree, for the poor who had no trees.

**Q.** What tree did St. John see in heaven?

**A.** The Tree of Life.

**Q.** Who is the Tree of Life?

**A.** Jesus Christ.

**Q.** With what have good fruits been compared in the Bible?

**A.** With good works.

Q. With what are trees frequently compared?

A. With people.

Q. What is that substance inside trees which affords them nourishment?

A. The sap.

Q. What does God sometimes do with trees, to punish man?

A. He sends a blight on them, or otherwise destroys them.

Q. What Roman general ordered all the trees about Jerusalem to be cut down?

A. Titus: A.D. 70.

Q. Will a tree shoot again if cut down?

A. Yes.

Q. Who refers to this?

A. Job.

Q. Why did God forbid the Israelites to worship in groves of trees?

A. Because idols were so often worshiped there.

Q. How many prophets of the groves were there in Ahab's time?

A. Four hundred.

Q. Who once ordered five kings to be hanged on five trees?

A. Joshua.

Q. Whose baker was hanged on a tree?

A. Pharaoh's.

Q. What does the Jewish law say of hanging?

A. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Q. Who became a curse for us?

A. Our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Q. Were the Jews allowed to cut down their enemies' trees?

A. No.

Q. What does Solomon call wisdom?

A. A tree of life.

Q. What is remarkable of the almond tree?

A. It is the quickest to blossom of all trees.

Q. Where in the Bible are almonds first mentioned?

A. In Genesis: where Joseph's brethren took some as a present to him.

Q. Whose rod brought forth almonds?

A. Aaron's.

Q. What does Solomon mean when he says, —"The almond tree shall flourish"?

A. That in old age the hair turns white, like the blossoms of the almond tree.

Q. What is the laurel or bay tree?

A. A dark evergreen tree.

Q. Who compares the *seeming* happiness of the wicked to this?

A. David.

Q. What does the tree called juniper mean in the Bible?

A. A sort of broom, which generally grows in the desert.

Q. What prophet once slept under a juniper tree?

A. Elijah.

Q. Of what use are the roots of the juniper?

A. For fuel.

Q. Where are coals of juniper spoken of?

A. In the Psalms.

Q. What tree is meant by the chestnut of the Bible?

A. The plane tree.

Q. What sort of tree is it?

A. A fine and noble tree.

Q. What does it afford?

A. The pleasantest and coolest shade in summer, and the warmest shelter in winter.

Q. What do some persons think the bramble of the Bible to be?

A. The prickly pear.

Q. Who spoke a parable about trees?

A. Jotham.

Q. What tree was vain enough to become king of the trees?

A. The bramble.

Q. Is the seed of the mustard tree small?

A. Yes. The smallest of all seeds.

Q. Who spoke a parable about the mustard seed?

A. The Lord Jesus Christ.

Q. What other lesson did He teach from it?

A. A lesson of faith.

Q. From what fruit is wine made?

A. Grapes.

Q. What is the name of the tree?

A. The vine.

Q. Who brought grapes of great size to the children of Israel in the wilderness?

A. The twelve spies.

Q. Who planted a vineyard, and became drunk with the wine of it?

A. Noah.

Q. With what is a vineyard compared?

A. God's church.

Q. Who spoke parables about vineyards?

A. The Lord Jesus: also Isaiah.

Q. Do vines live to a great age?

A. Yes. One at a hundred years old is considered young.

Q. How is the juice of the grape got out?

A. By squeezing or pressing.

Q. Who said, "I have trodden the winepress alone"?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. What was Jesus' first miracle?

A. Turning water into wine.

Q. Of whom was it said, "his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk"?



A. Of the tribe of Judah.

Q. Who brought David, as a present, dried grapes or raisins?

A. Abigail.

Q. Who says, "I am the Vine"?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. What people were commanded to drink no wine?

A. The Nazarites and the Rechabites.

Q. What places are mentioned in the Bible as famous for grapes?

A. Eshcol, Sibmah, Lebanon, and Egypt.

Q. What grapes were bad?

A. The grapes of Sodom.

Q. What did Jesus give to His disciples before His death?

A. Bread and wine, in remembrance of His body and blood.

Q. What is taking this now called?

A. The Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, or the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Q. When are young people admitted to the table of the Lord?

A. After their confirmation, or renewing of their baptismal vows.

Q. With what trees did Balaam compare Israel?

A. Cedars and lign aloes.

Q. What was the lign aloe?

A. A beautiful sweet smelling tree.

Q. What are the aloes of the Bible?

A. A kind of sweet spice.

Q. What tree besides the cedar did Solomon use for the Temple and his own palace?

A. The algum or almulg tree.

Q. What is it supposed to have been?

A. Red sandal-wood.

Q. What is the cypress?

A. A dark grave looking tree,—often regarded as an emblem of sorrow and death.

Q. Is the wood valuable?

A. Yes. It is hard and durable.

Q. The doors of what great temple were made from it?

A. The Temple of Diana of Ephesus.

Q. What has the ash tree been called?

A. The husbandman's tree, and the Venus of the forest.

Q. For what was the inner bark of this tree once used?

A. For writing upon: it was very useful.

Q. Of what does Isaiah tell us idols were made?

A. Of the wood of the cyprus, oak, and ash.

Q. Are there still people in the world who worship idols?

A. Yes. There are still more heathens than Christians.

Q. Name the tree mentioned in terms of the highest admiration in the Bible?

A. The cedar.

Q. Where did cedars grow?

A. On the mountains of Lebanon.

Q. Is the cedar an evergreen tree?

A. It is.

Q. What nation, in its beauty and gracefulness, was compared by Ezekiel to the cedar?

A. The Assyrian.

Q. Are there any cedars supposed to be now standing from Solomon's time?

A. A few.

Q. What feast is each year celebrated under one of the oldest cedars, by certain religious sects of Palestine?

A. The Feast of Transfiguration.

Q. For what was cedar-wood much used in Solomon's time?

A. For building the Temple and the king's palace.

Q. Is there any building in Palestine with beams of ancient cedar?

A. Yes. The Church of the Nativity, in Bethlehem; built by the Empress Helena.

Q. Whose height was compared to the cedars?

A. The Amorites. (Amos. ii. 9.)

Q. What does the voice of the Lord do?

A. It "breaketh the cedars of Lebanon."

Q. What does Solomon say of words fitly spoken?

A. That they are like "apples of gold, in pictures of silver."

Q. Who is said to be like the apple tree among the trees of the wood?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. What town in Palestine is still celebrated for its apples?

A. Askelon.

Q. Who mentions the box tree in the Bible?

A. Isaiah (xlix. 19.)

Q. Is the wood of the box tree very valuable?

A. Yes. It is hard and smooth.

Q. What is the husk tree?

A. It is a tree not unlike the apple tree, and bears a kind of pod or bean, which is used as food for pigs.

Q. Who would gladly have eaten husks?

A. The prodigal son.

Q. What does Isaiah say of the myrtle tree?

A. "Instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree."

Q. What is this like?

A. Grace coming into the heart instead of sin.

Q. Who saw in a vision many myrtle trees?

A. Zechariah.

Q. In what Jewish feast were myrtle boughs used?

A. The Feast of Tabernacles.

Q. What is peculiar about the fruit of the fig tree?

A. It comes before the leaves.

Q. How many crops of figs are there in a year?

A. Three.

Q. Which crop is the best?

A. The first.

Q. Who cursed a barren fig tree?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. Who spoke a parable of a fig tree?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. With whom are barren fig trees compared?

A. With people who do not bring forth fruits of righteousness.

Q. For what did the ancient Egyptians use the wood of the fig tree?

A. For making coffins, because it lasted so long.

Q. What name means "the house of figs"?

A. Bethphage.

Q. Are there many fig trees left in Palestine?

A. Few comparatively.

Q. What is meant by "every man sitting under his own vine and fig tree"?

A. That there shall be peace, without fear of evil.

Q. When shall this blessed time come?

A. When Jesus comes to reign upon earth.

Q. What disciple did Jesus see sitting under a fig tree?

A. Nathanael.

Q. Who was cured of his sickness by a plaster of figs?

A. Hezekiah, king of Judah.

Q. Who made aprons of fig leaves?

A. Adam and Eve.

Q. What two trees are supposed to be meant by the teil tree of the Bible?

A. The lime some think, others the terebinth tree.

Q. What is remarkable of the terebinth tree?

A. That before its trunk becomes rotten, a new shoot has sprung up in its roots for another tree.

Q. Who refers to this, and compares it with the saved people?

A. Isaiah.

Q. What tree is supposed to mean the sycamore tree?

A. The mulberry.

Q. For what are the leaves of the mulberry tree useful?

A. The food of silk-worms.

Q. Who was told by God to listen for a breeze among the mulberry trees before going to battle?

A. David. (1 Chron. xiv. 14.)

Q. Who taught a lesson of faith from the sycamine tree?

A. Jesus.

Q. What is the wood of fir or pine trees called?

A. Deal.

Q. What is made from the sap of the fir tree?

A. Tar, turpentine, etc.

Q. Who sent floats of fir-wood to Solomon?

A. Hiram, king of Tyre.

Q. Were instruments of music ever made from fir-wood?

A. Yes. David played upon such.

Q. Who made their ship boards of fir?

A. The Syrians.

Q. Who was compared with a green fir tree?

A. Ephraim, by Hosea.

Q. The wood of what tree is the strongest and most useful?

A. The oak.

Q. Who in ancient times made their ~~cars~~ of oak?

A. The Syrians.

Q. Is the bark of oak useful?

A. Yes. For tanning and dying.

Q. Who lodged at the house of Simon the tanner?

A. St. Peter.

Q. Where is there a very aged oak now standing in Palestine? and what is its name?

A. Near Hebron. Abraham's oak

Q. What oaks were anciently much celebrated?

A. The oaks of Bashan.

Q. Were oaks often used for idolatrous worship?

A. Yes: and there are still sacred trees in Palestine.

Q. Who prophecies of a time when idolaters shall be ashamed of the oaks which they have desired?

A. Isaiah.

Q. Who buried his family idols under an oak?

A. Jacob.

Q. Who was buried under an oak?

A. Deborah, Rachel's nurse.

Q. What king of Israel and his sons were buried under an oak?

A. Saul.

Q. Who saw a vision of an angel under an oak?

A. Gideon.

Q. Who sat under an oak when tempted to disobey God?



A. The old prophet who was sent to Bethel.

Q. What nation's strength was compared to the oak ?

A. The Amorite's.

Q. Who was hung by his hair in an oak ?

A. Absalom.

Q. What fruit does the sycamore tree of Palestine bear ?

A. Figs, which grow on the branches.

Q. Are they much liked ?

A. No.

Q. What prophet was a gatherer of sycamore fruit ?

A. Amos.

Q. Who climbed into a sycamore tree to see Jesus ?

A. Zacchæus.

Q. Of what do we generally regard the willow as an emblem ?

A. Of mourning.

Q. What nations regard it as an emblem of joy and happiness ?

A. The Persian and Arabian nations.

Q. Who hung their harps upon the willows by the river-side ?

A. The captive Jews in Babylon.

Q. Who says of the righteous "they shall be like willows by the water courses" ?

A. Isaiah.

Q. What is the shittim or shittah tree?

A. The acacia tree.

Q. Where did it grow, as mentioned in the Bible?

A. In the desert.

Q. For what was the shittim-wood much used?

A. The building of the Tabernacle; and even the ark itself was made of this wood.

Q. What tree is generally thought to have been that which Moses saw on fire in Horeb?

A. The acacia.

Q. Where did pomegranates once abound?

A. In Palestine.

Q. Who lived for some time under a pomegranate tree?

A. Saul.

Q. On what were pomegranates worked?

A. On the high priest's robe.

Q. With what has an orchard of pomegranates been compared?

A. The Church of Christ.

Q. What does the olive tree most resemble in appearance?

A. The willow.

Q. What do olive berries yield?

A. A valuable oil.

Q. On what does the olive tree always rest its roots?

A. On a rock.

Q. On what rock should the Christian rest?

A. The Rock of Ages.

Q. What mountain took its name from this tree?

A. The Mount of Olives.

Q. How long is the olive tree before its berries grow?

A. Seven years.

Q. And how long before really good?

A. Ten or fifteen years: but then it bears fruit for ages.

Q. What king had immense cellars of olive oil?

A. Solomon.

Q. What were made of olive-wood in Solomon's Temple?

A. The cherubims, and the doors and posts of the Temple.

Q. What brought an olive leaf in her mouth?

A. Noah's dove.

Q. What are compared with olive branches?

A. Good children.

Q. Is the olive often used as an emblem in the Bible?

A. Very frequently.

Q. Who are called wild olive trees by St. Paul?

A. Gentiles.

Q. What has the palm tree been called?

A. The prince of the vegetable kingdom.

Q. Where does the palm grow best?

A. In valleys and in deserts.

Q. What is the fruit of the palm of the Bible?

A. Dates.

Q. Is every part of the palm of use.

A. Yes. Even the stones of the dates.

Q. What city was called the city of palm trees?

A. Jericho.

Q. What does Bethany mean?

A. The house of dates.

Q. When were branches of palm cut down and thrown in the way?

A. When Jesus rode in triumph into Jerusalem.

Q. What country means the land of palms?

A. Phœnicia.

Q. What are pilgrims in the Holy Land called?

A. Palmers, because they carry branches of palm.

Q. What Sunday is named after Jesus' entry into Jerusalem?

A. Palm Sunday.

Q. Does the palm always grow straight?

A. Yes.

Q. Of what is this an emblem ?

A. Of the righteous.

Q. What trees were in Solomon's Temple ?

A. Palms, overlaid with gold.

Q. Where were there twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees ?

A. At Elim ; in the desert.

Q. Who lived under a palm tree ?

A. Deborah, the judge and prophetess.

Q. Of what is the palm the sign ?

A. Victory.

Q. What did St John see in heaven ?

A. A great multitude, with palms in their hands.

Q. What victory had this multitude gained ?

A. The victory of faith through Jesus Christ.

## PRECIOUS STONES OF THE BIBLE.

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IN all times beautiful stones and gems have been valued as ornaments. And from almost the beginning of the Book of Genesis, we read of precious stones,—and the pleasure women especially had in wearing them as ear-rings, nose-jewels, bracelets, or necklaces. When Abraham sent his servant to seek a wife for



Rebekah receiving the Jewels from Eliezer.

Isaac, he took jewels with him, and gave to Rebekah, ear-rings and bracelets of gold. (See Gen. xxiv. 22.) One of the prophets speaks of the impossibility of a bride, or young married woman, forgetting her ornaments.

When God appeared to men, his beauty, we are generally told, was like some beautiful and shining stone. Gems, bright and lovely, were used for the high priest's breastplate and ephod; also for kings' crowns, for the seals and rings of great men, for decorating idols, and for beautifying places of worship, such as the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the Temple at Jerusalem.

Jesus Christ is also compared with a precious stone,—the foundation of His Church. (See Isa. xxviii. 16. 1 Peter ii. 6.) Jesus also speaks to the Jews of the time when He will restore them again to their own land, and says He will lay their foundations with sapphires; their windows shall be of agates, the gates of carbuncles, and all their borders of pleasant stones. God calls his people his jewels (Mal. iii. 17): and He speaks, through St. John in the Revelation, of the beauty of heaven, and the many bright and lovely stones there.

All this should teach us useful lessons. We should not look at precious stones only as curiosities, or because they have cost a great deal of money; but we should think of them as symbols

or representations of the beauties of heaven, and the bright and never-ending joys which are at God's right hand for evermore.

But now let me tell you a little about all the precious stones mentioned in the Bible, and also of some of the passages where they are alluded to.

Bdellium is the first jewel named in the Scriptures. (Genesis ii. 12.) It was used as an ornament, by people in ancient times, though it is not itself a precious stone. There is something very curious about it: it is the juice of a plant which grows in some Eastern countries. This juice hardens in red pieces; and after a time, it is so much like a stone, that it is polished or brightened, and made into ornaments.

Along with bdellium, the onyx-stone is mentioned (in Genesis ii. 12.), as being found in the land of Havilah, which was between the great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. The onyx is a pretty stone, partly transparent, (or only half clear); it is marked with stripes of brown, blue, green, black, and white. Its name is taken from a Greek word which means *a nail*; as it was thought to look like that little white crescent which you often see in people's nails.

Job, who lived about the time of Abraham, speaks of the "precious onyx" (Job xxviii. 16); but though so valuable, he says it cannot pur-



chase wisdom. No! 'dear children, nor can any earthly treasure purchase wisdom. God alone can give it; and I hope you will ever pray that His Holy Spirit may make you wise unto salvation.

The onyx was one of the stones in the high priest's breastplate. Do you know what that was? It was, as its name tells us, a kind of square plate, to be worn on the breast of the high priest. It had in it twelve beautiful, dazzling stones, on which were engraved, or written, the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. It was fastened to the ephod and belt of the priest, by golden chains. Do you not think it must have looked very bright and splendid? In ancient times, people who knew no better, thought that the onyx might be used as a medicine; but in these days there seems no reason to believe in its efficacy.

The prophet Ezekiel mentions the onyx-stone as one of the gems of the Garden of Eden. (Ezek. xxviii. 13.) How many lovely and beautiful things must have been in that fair garden! Is it not sad to think of Adam and Eve's disobedience, and all the evil consequences of their sin? But there is a fairer and a brighter place remaining, for those who love and fear God in this life—even heaven! May you all, dear children, enter that blessed place, and shine as the stars there, for ever and ever.

## Precious Stones.

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### THE DIAMOND.

IN our time the diamond is more talked about and valued than any other stone. In the days when the Bible was written, it does not seem to have been so well known or valued. It was, however, one of the gems of Eden, and was mentioned, like the onyx, by Ezekiel,—and was also one of the stones of the high priest's breast-plate.

Diamonds are dug out of the earth, from places called diamond mines. The best come from India and Brazil. Diamonds are of three colours.—beautiful shining white, black, and brown. The first-named are the most valued. They are the hardest of all gems, and some people think they are the same as adamant,—of which we often read as remarkable for its hardness. When diamonds are first brought from the mine, they are rough and unpolished; but still the merchant would not throw them away,—he knows

full well their value, and what they will become when they have been cut and polished.

Have you ever heard any one called a "rough diamond"? It is an expression used, to indicate that though he may not have pleasant manners, or very soft speech, yet he has a kind heart and warm feelings. The diamond can cut many things which even a sharp knife cannot: for instance, it can cut glass, over which a knife has no power.

True believers in Jesus Christ, who are compared with precious stones, are often made the means of working upon the hearts and consciences of unbelievers, who may be compared with glass.

Shall I tell you a little story of a diamond? There was once a great and good man,—a powerful preacher, and devoted Christian. He used to travel about, preaching the Gospel. He at one time went to stay with some interesting and clever people. During the time he was with them, he could not help noticing that though the family were kind, amiable, and clever, they had not yet learnt to know Jesus as their only Saviour. He longed to speak to them of Him, but somehow or other, during his short visit, he never had an opportunity. He could not bear to go away without doing so,—and yet time past on, the carriage to take him from them arrived, his travelling trunk was put into it, and

he was even saying, "Farewell!"—when a sudden thought came into his mind. Once more he returned to his bedroom; and going to the window, he wrote upon a pane of glass, with a diamond ring he wore: "*One thing thou lackest.*"

These words were spoken to the young man whom Jesus loved, when He saw how kind and amiable he was, though he had not entirely given his heart to the Saviour.

Soon after his departure, the master of the house went up stairs, saw the words,—and the truth flashed into his mind who had written them, and for what purpose. It was God's Spirit which led him there, and showed him what a sinner he was. From that time he began to seek God with all his heart; and not himself only, but his wife and children were also brought to Jesus, through those few words, written on a pane of glass with the point of a diamond.

This kind of writing was known to the men of old in the Bible: Jeremiah (xvii. 1) speaks of the sin of Judah being written with the point of a diamond. This meant, the words would never fade away nor become dim, but remain as a memorial against them. The people of Tyre, in its days of greatness, used to trade in diamonds. (See Ezekiel xxxvii. 13). The poor Hindoos think that these stones can keep them from harm, and wear them for that reason; but we,

who have the Bible to teach us, know that God gives His angels charge over us. Is not this a much more delightful feeling than trusting in a little shining stone?

You have heard of the great Kohinoor diamond (or *Mountain of Light*, as its name signifies) which belongs to our queen. You would perhaps hardly think it a *mountain* of light, for it is only about the size of a pigeon's egg: but do you know that it is worth two millions of pounds? It was found in India, about three hundred years ago: then it was uncut, and of course looked larger, but not nearly so bright and beautiful. When the English conquered India, it was given up to them for our queen Victoria, and was shown both at the Great Exhibition of 1851 and 1862, where, if you were there, I dare say you saw it.

The Emperor of Russia has a diamond about the same size as the Kohinoor, which was said once to have been the eye of an idol god in Malabar. A French soldier pretended to worship this idol, and be its priest; and one day he stole the diamond, and escaped with it, and now it is a crown jewel of Russia.

Is it not sad to think of figures which can neither see, hear, taste, nor smell, being worshiped; and such costly offerings being brought to them, which they have no power to value nor desire to possess?

The King of Portugal has the largest diamond in the world ; it weighs eleven ounces, but it is not of such beauty as the Kohinoor. When the diamond is polished, it must be done with its own dust, and this diamond-dust is so valuable, it is sold for £50 an ounce.

This dust is like the words of Christians, which, dropping from their lips in trouble, may, like the cuttings of a diamond, be very valuable in teaching others their hope, faith, and love. But there is one thing about the diamond which is curious,—though so hard in itself, it cannot bear the action of fire, but perishes in it ; which most other precious stones do not. This is like our bodies ; however beautiful they may be, and healthy, they cannot resist the power of death ; which, like the fire, passes over them and causes them to perish. But one other thing I will tell you of the diamond, from which may be seen a likeness to the Christian believer : after the diamond has been exposed to the rays of the sun, if taken and placed in the dark, it will shine and glitter like a star. A piece of glass, or indeed anything else, would not do this. The follower of Jesus is like the diamond ; for, after the Sun of Righteousness (Jesus) has shone into his heart, in the dark time of sorrow and trouble, his faith, hope, and love shine brightly, and cheer and light up even the darkest scenes.

## THE SAPPHIRE

Is the next hardest stone to the diamond. It is generally of a beautiful dark blue colour, and transparent, though there are several other kinds, of different hues. It is also a stone mentioned in the high priest's breastplate. Job likewise speaks of it as known in his time (Job xxviii); and the merchants of Tyre traded in it in the days when Ezekiel prophesied (xxviii. 13). *It is now found chiefly in Europe and Asia: the best come from Pegu.* Unlike the diamond, fire does not destroy it, but turns it white. In this we may be reminded of many people who seem to be Christians by their appearance or manners, but who, in times of sorrow or temptation, change their religion, and give up their faith. The sapphire is often mentioned in the Bible,—but two distinct kinds are, no doubt, alluded to. What is called *lapis lazuli*, is a sort of sapphire-stone, found in large pieces and quantities. It was, in ancient times, often used for paving the floors of palaces and temples. It is not clear, like the sapphire gem, but is of a beautiful blue colour, and has points or marks of gold colour on it, something like the starry sky.

When the elders of Israel saw God, we are told that under His feet was "as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone," etc. (Exod. xxiv. 10.)

Ezekiel also, when he saw the appearance of a man on a throne, beheld something like a sapphire stone. This vision he saw twice. (Ezek. i. 26 ; x. 1.)

Again : we read, that one of the foundations of the Holy City in Heaven is of a sapphire stone. (Rev. xxi. 19.) How beautiful must that city be, whose very walls are garnished with such rare and precious stones !

#### THE TOPAZ.

JOB speaks of the value of the topaz of Ethiopia (xxviii. 19). It seems curious that many of these precious stones should have been known and valued so early,—but the ancients seem to have even thought as much of their price and worth as people of the present day.

The topaz, like the gems before mentioned, was one of the stones in the high priest's breastplate. It is generally yellow, but when placed in the fire, changes to violet, rose, or white. There is a mountain called the topaz mountain, because of the number of these stones found in it. They abound in the East Indies, Brazil, and Peru ; and of late years, many have been seen in Tasmania. In parts of Europe, also, the topaz is sometimes discovered ; and in Scotland, that pretty pale brown stone, called cairngorm, so well known there, is a species of topaz.



Yellow topazes are sometimes called yellow sapphires.

### THE EMERALD.

THE emerald is a very valuable stone, of which there are many kinds. Both the topaz and emerald are referred to by Ezekiel (xxviii. 13), as the stones of Eden, and articles of the merchandise of Tyre. Emeralds are chiefly found in South America; but others are brought from Egypt and India: from the former no doubt by the Israelites. There is a beautiful shrine, or tomb, in a Romish church at Loretto, which has in it numbers of these brilliant stones. When put into the fire, the green changes to blue; but when cool, the green colour returns again. Have you never heard of people whose faith has failed them in torture, but returned again when the trial has past? Such Christians are faint-hearted and weak; they are not like that "glorious army of martyrs," of whom we sing in the "Te Deum;" but are like the bruised reed, without strength in the blast. Yet Jesus pities them; and with His sustaining help, they may be wiser and better for their fall from grace, and afterwards remain stedfast unto the end, and at length become jewels in the crown of Jesus, in His kingdom. In Peru there was once the largest emerald in the world: it was

the size of the egg of an ostrich. This emerald was called the "Queen of Emeralds," and was actually worshiped by the deluded people, who used to bring offerings to it of smaller stones of the same kind, which they called daughters of the larger one. How much better would it have been had they devoted these gems to the only true God, who made heaven and earth! The emerald was a stone in that wondrous high priest's breastplate. Ezekiel also mentions it as an article of trade between the merchants of Syria and Tyre. When the beloved St. John was caught up into heaven, and saw the throne of God, he tells us, that round about the throne there was a rainbow, "in sight like unto an emerald." How beautiful must this have been, not only to look at, but as showing how God, even in heaven, remembers his promise to Noah, — never to drown the world again. Surely if God so remembers His poor insignificant creatures, we ought never to forget Him, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being" • •

#### THE RUBY OR SARDIUS, AND SARDINE STONE.

• **THOUGH** such different sounding names, these gems are believed to be all of the same kind. Rubies are very valuable. Some stones of this kind are worth a thousand pounds each; and yet Solomon, the wisest of men, declares that

wisdom is more precious than rubies (see Prov. iii. 15): and Job, who seems to have known so much of gems, and their value, tells us the same thing (Job. xxviii. 18). Jeremiah, in mentioning what the Nazarites were like, says, they were "more ruddy in body than rubies (which are a beautiful red colour) and their polishing was of sapphire." (Lam. iv. 7.) Rubies are chiefly found in Ceylon and Pegu; but the Israelites also knew of them; for a *sarāine*, or



The Jewish High Priest.

ruby, is the first stone mentioned in the breast-plate.\* In our Queen's crown there is a ruby nearly as large as a walnut, which was long ago brought from Spain by the brave Black Prince. The Great Mogul has one hundred and eight rubies in *his* crown; but though these lovely gems may glisten in his diadem, we fear the monarch of Tartary is no better for them; for he has not yet found that wisdom from above, which is more precious than rubies, and without which all earthly treasures are useless.

#### THE BERYL

Is a light green stone, sometimes called aqua marine, which is brought from China, Siberia, and Brazil. It was in the breastplate, and was also one of the stones of Eden. (Ezekiel xxviii. 13.) The beryl is often spoken of in the Bible: in Daniel's vision of the Lord Jesus, His body was said to be like beryl (Dan. x. 6); and the cherubims which Ezekiel saw, had wheels connected with them of the colour of beryl. (Ezek. x. 9.)

In that beautiful, but mysterious Song of Solomon, which you will perhaps understand when you are older, he compares the hands of Jesus "to gold rings set with beryl: His belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires." (Song of Solomon v. 14.) Beryl is also one of the four-

dations of the New Jerusalem, as well as the sapphire and sardine already mentioned.

### THE CARBUNCLE

Is not so frequently alluded to in the Bible as many other stones, being in those days very rare, and valuable. It is of a deeper red than the ruby, and chiefly brought from the East Indies. Ezekiel alludes to it, however, in chap. xxviii. 13; and it was also in the breastplate of the high priest. In the time when the Jews shall be restored again to God's favour, a glorious promise is given by the 'mouth of the prophet Isaiah,—“I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of *carbuncles*, and all thy borders of precious stones; and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children,” etc. (Isa. liv. 12, 13.) Dear children, will you not pray for that time, when the now despised and hated Jews shall be restored to their own land, and shall own Jesus as their only Saviour: “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee.”

### THE JASPER.\*

JASPER is a gem often alluded to in the Bible. There are two distinct stones having this name.

\* Some commentators think the jasper of Scripture was a kind of diamond.

The one best known in ancient times was the kind found among the loose sands of the river of Egypt, and which was in shades of red and brown colour. It was very much used by the ancients as an ornament. Ezekiel mentions it; and it was the last named stone of the breastplate. The appearance of God was described by St. John, as like "a jasper and a sardine stone" (Rev. iv. 3). We may suppose it was of a deep, rich, red colour, which would look beautiful, contrasted with the emerald green of that rainbow which was round about the throne. The New Jerusalem, which St. John also saw coming down from heaven, had light "like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." (Rev. xxi. 11). And, again, we read that "the building of the wall of it was of jasper" (Rev. xxi. 18); and one of the foundations of this heavenly city was of this most precious stone also.

In the city of Cologne, there is a most beautiful cathedral, with a shrine made entirely of jasper, though, of course, not of the most valuable kind. In this shrine there are three skulls. And to whom do you think the Roman Catholics tell us these skulls belonged? To the wise men of the East, who came to worship Jesus, guided by the star. Many and rare are the precious stones about their supposed remains.

*Yet what Protestant believes this? But even if they were the skulls of the wise men, is it not a sad thing to think of preserving such poor remains of these wonderful men? Better, far better, would it be to bury their bones out of sight; while their faith and adoration of the Saviour should ever be remembered.*

### THE AMETHYST

Is a beautiful violet-coloured stone, brought from the East and West Indies, Persia, South America, and Europe. The word amethyst was taken from a Greek word, which means, "not intoxicating." The Persians used to make wine cups of this stone, because it was supposed wine drunk from them would not have any bad effect. It was a stone of the breast-plate, and also one of the foundations of the new Jerusalem.

### THE AGATE.

THIS stone derives its name from Achates, in the kingdom of Sicily, where it is found in great quantities. It is very pretty, and of many colours, but not so valuable as most gems. Many agates, however, are much prized for their age, or antiquity. Some most curious ones have been found in the ruins of Assyrian cities, having very strange histories engraved upon them of events past long ago, which we, thousands of

years after, are enabled to read. Agate, though not so valuable as the other stones, was chosen for the breast-plate. In that beautiful chapter of Isaiah (liv. 12), of which I have before spoken, and in which God tells us of the restoration of the Jews, the windows of their city are to be made of *agates*, and their gates of carbuncles,—or as some think, precious garnets.

#### THE CHALCEDONY, CHRYSOLITE OR CHRYSOPRASUS.

THESE gems are all supposed to be of the same kind, though they vary a little in colour. In Ezekiel xxvii. 16, the word called agate, means the chrysoprasus, and was one of the gems in which Tyre traded with Syria. The onyx is also considered a sort of chrysolite. The chalcedony takes its name from the city of Chalcedon, because it was first found there. It has also been discovered in England and Scotland. It is very hard, and is sometimes white, grey, brown, yellow, and yellow-green; this last-named is generally called *chrysoprasus*. It is one of the stones which will not melt or perish in the fire. The three are mentioned in Rev. xxi. 19, 20, as foundations of the holy city; from which we may suppose it is rare and beautiful, as no other species of gem is three times named together in the Bible.



## THE SARDONYX OR CORNELIAN.

THESE stones are supposed to be of the same kind. The best are brought from the East Indies. They are of many varieties and colours. Some think they are also of the same class as the onyx. These stones are only half clear, or transparent, and before their beautiful colours are brought out they have to be heated in the fire, when they become lovelier and clearer. How many true believers there are in the world, who do not appear at first very agreeable or pleasant, but when God sends them trouble (or puts them in a fire, as it were), we learn how patient and holy they are, and how much more they are to be valued and admired. Are they not like the sardonyx, which, after being heated, becomes so much brighter and clearer? And is not this stone, therefore, fit to be one of the foundation walls of the heavenly kingdom, where shall dwell those who came out of great tribulation, but who, with white robes washed in the blood of the Lamb, shall stand around the great white throne, singing Hallelujah!

## CORAL

Is not, like other gems and ornaments, dug from mines in the earth, but it is infinitely more wonderful and curious. I could tell you much about it, but as my book is chiefly designed for Sunday

reading I must only mention a few things now, hoping you will search out and see, in the week-day, more of this wonderful coral. Perhaps you know that coral is the work of tiny insects under the seas, and that it is the little cells or houses in which they live? How can I make you fully understand the smallness of these coral-makers? You can hardly enter into the belief that *one drop of water might hold five hundred millions* of them.\* They are far, far too small to be seen by your eye: and only by a powerful magnifying glass are they visible at all. Can you realize, or understand, how hundreds of miles of beds of beautiful coral are found in the sea, so hard and strong that people can walk on it, and all formed by these marvellous insects, or zoophytes. Can you not understand what David felt when he wrote that beautiful 107th Psalm, and the words, —“They that go down to the sea in ships, *that do business* in great waters; *these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.*” (Vers. 23, 24.) Job knew something of the wonders of coral in his day (xxviii. 18), but wisdom excelled it. Ezekiel also mentions it as an article of the trade of Tyre and Syria. (xxvii. 16.)

This beautiful and curious production, so highly prized as an ornament, is of many colours,

\* Ehrenberg. See “Earth’s Riches:” Religious Tract Society.

—black, pink, green, white, and yellow. How beautiful it must look under the water, with its various graceful shapes and forms! For I must tell you that there are no less than one thousand five hundred different kinds of coral insects known, and all make their cells of different shapes: some are like bushes, or gracefully hanging trees; others, like long and feathery grass, etc.

Coral is found in many seas,—frequently in the Mediterranean, Red Sea, and Persian Gulf; and it is eagerly sought for by the coral gatherers. I have no doubt you have often seen necklaces made from it: many little babies wear them. Perhaps you have a little sister, round whose tiny throat is often fastened a string of coral? When you look at it you will now know more of coral than perhaps you did before, and value it as the work of these wonderful little creatures, which lasts long after they have died and been succeeded by millions of others, as industrious in their turn in making this beautiful gem. Other creatures—beasts, birds, and fishes—may delight us by their appearance, while they live, but when they are dead we soon forget them, for they have left nothing to remind us of them; but these coral insects, whose beauty our eyes never saw, have left a lasting memorial of their patient industry.

Will you not learn a lesson from them, dear children? How, even a child, small, unlearned, and weak like yourselves, may be the means of doing something which may last when you have passed for ever from the earth. You can at least set a good example, by patience and obedience, to those placed above you. Have you no little brothers and sisters to whom you can be kind and loving, and whom you can talk to about Jesus the Saviour? Are there no poor little children near you, who cannot read, whom you might help to teach? Are there no poor heathen, at home and abroad, to whom you may now and then give a little of your money? Yes! there are all,—all these things; and it only wants a willing heart and hand to make you, like a little coral insect, begin and carry on a work which may last for ever. Try, then, to do something for God at once.

• THE JACINTH OR HYACINTH.

THIS stone is of many colours: that kind called the hyacinth is of violet. It is supposed that the stone called ligure, one of those in the breast-plate, was a sort of hyacinth. Another name for the jacinth is “jargon on diamonds.” It is generally found in the sands of rivers—chiefly in Ceylon. It is twice mentioned in the Revelation: first, in one of the visions, St. John saw

horsemen, having breastplates of fire, of jacinth, and of brimstone (Rev. ix. 17) ; and afterwards, again, it is mentioned as a foundation-stone of the Holy City. (Rev. xxi. 20.)

#### THE PEARL.

WHO has not heard of, or seen pearls? Almost every child has, or at least an imitation of these lovely, pure gems. But how many know from whence they come, or by what they are formed? They are found inside oysters, deep down in the cold waters of the ocean; where poor men seek for them by diving among the oysters, which they bring up and examine. Many have no pearls inside—others have been found which contained a hundred. But how do pearls get inside the oyster? That is unknown; but it is generally thought to be a disease of the fish. It takes seven years for them to grow in the shell; so the divers search in the same bed every seven years. They go down forty or fifty times a-day, to bring up the bags full of oysters. It is dangerous work for them, poor men,—and holding their breath shortens their lives; besides which, there are dangers in the sea, from a fish called the sawfish,—a dreadful creature,—which has sometimes been known to cut the poor diver's body in two. Pearls are chiefly found in the Persian Gulf, or near the Island of Ceylon, and

the East Indies : formerly, many were found off the coast of Scotland, but few are discovered there now.

In all ages pearls have been highly valued ; and many curious stories are told of celebrated ones. Perhaps you have heard of that wicked heathen queen, Cleopatra, who declared she would make a feast for the Roman general she loved, which should cost more than £50,000. She had two splendid pearl ear-rings, valued at £52,000 each : during the feast, she took off one, and dissolved, or melted, it in vinegar, and then drank off the draught to his health. The foolish queen's other ear-ring is said to have been taken to decorate an idol afterwards.

But I must tell you now what the Bible says of the pearl. Jesus Christ Himself spoke of this gem : should we not therefore esteem it highly ? He compared the Gospel, or good news, to the "pearl of great price." (See Matthew xiii. 45, 46.) Yes ! it is indeed a precious gift to us poor miserable sinners. As the pearl, dear children, is formed from a disease in the oyster, so has the Gospel been sent to compensate for the disease of sin in our hearts, by opening out the means of attaining everlasting life through Jesus Christ. But the Gospel, like pearls, must be sought for, and earnestly desired : much pains must be taken to find it. Pearls are found in

the *deepest* waters: so it is often through the deep waters of sorrow that people must pass, ere they find the pearls of the Gospel. Pearls are often imitated. *You* could not tell, I dare say, the difference between a real one and an imitation, but a skilful pearl merchant could. There are in the world many people who pretend to be holy and true believers, and the world is deceived by them; but Jesus can tell at once which are His true pearls, and which are not: and in the day when He makes up His jewels, the true gems will shine forth in His kingdom, while the false ones will be broken and scattered, as are false pearls. All other gems require cutting and polishing, before they are fit for setting as ornaments. Not so the pearl: it comes forth pure and beautiful, ready for use. So does the Gospel: it needs no preparation of man to make it more lovely; it is ready to be received into the heart at once, and adorn the life for evermore.

I have told you of those other lovely stones, which make the foundation-walls of the heavenly city: but what are the twelve gates, ~~but~~ twelve pearls? Each gate *one*,—leading into streets of purest gold, like glass! Try to realize that glorious place, with its walls of jasper, and buildings of gold; with its foundations of jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, ~~sardonyx~~, sardius,

chrysolyte, beryl, topaz, chrysoprasus, jacinth, and amethyst; with its gates of pearl, and streets of gold! Without a temple,—for Jesus is the Temple; without sun or moon to shine in it,—for the glory of God and of the Lamb, is its light! And better, far better than all,—in that Holy City there shall be nothing sinful or impure; all will be love and harmony, all joy and peace. There all sickness and sorrow shall have fled away, all pain shall be gone, and the tears which used to flow shall be for ever wiped from all faces!

Dear children, do you not desire to enter that New Jerusalem? Not, I hope, alone to see its glories, but that you may be with Jesus: *that*, after all, is what will make the great joy of heaven. The brightest, fairest, loveliest gems would not charm you after a time: for He alone is the lasting light and life of His people, and their joy.

That you, my dear children, may be gems in the Saviour's diadem, is my earnest prayer for you; and also that though we are unknown to each other on earth, we may all meet around the Saviour's throne, and see that which as yet, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him."

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“HERE WE HAVE NO CONTINUING CITY.”

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Brief life is here our portion,—brief sorrow,—short-lived  
care ;

The life that knows no ending—the *tearless* life—is there.

O happy retribution ! Short toil, eternal rest ;  
For mortals and for sinners, a mansion with the blest.

And *now* we fight the battle, but *then* we wear the crown  
Of full, and everlasting, and passionless renown.

And now we watch and struggle, and, now we live and  
hope ;

And Zion in her anguish, with Babylon must cope.

But He, whom now we trust in, shall then be seen and  
known ;

And they that know and see Him shall have Him for  
their own.

The morning shall awaken, the shadows shall decay,  
And each true-hearted servant shall shine as doth the day.

There God, our King and portion, in fulness of His grace,  
Shall we behold for ever, and worship face to face.

Oh ! sweet and blessed country, the home of God's elect !  
Oh ! sweet and blessed country, that eager hearts expect !

For thee, O dear dear country, mine eyes their vigils keep ;  
For very love beholding thy happy game, they weep.

The mention of thy glory is unction to the breast,  
And medicine in sickness, and love, and life, and rest.

O one,—O only mansion! O paradise of joy!  
Where tears are ever banished, and smiles have no alloy.

The Lamb is all thy splendour, the Crucified thy praise;  
His laud and benediction thy ransomed people raise.

With jasper glow thy bulwarks, thy streets with emeralds  
laze,  
The sardius and the topaz unite in thee their rays;

Thine ageless walls are bonded with amethyst unpriced;  
The saints build up the fabric, and the corner-stone is  
Christ.

Thou hast no shore, fair ocean! Thou hast no time, bright  
day!

Dear fountain of refreshment to pilgrims far away!

Upon the rock of ages they raised thy holy tower;  
Thine is the victor's laurel, and thine the golden dower.

Jerusalem the golden! With milk and honey blest,  
Beneath thy contemplation, sing heart and voice opprest.

I know not: oh! I know not, what joys await us there,—  
What radiancy of glory, what bliss beyond compare!

They stand, those walls of Zion, all jubilant with song,  
And bright with many an angel, and all the martyr  
throng.

The Prince is ever with them, the daylight is serene ;  
The pastures of the blessed are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the throne of David ; and there, from care  
released,

The shout of them that triumph, The song of them that  
feast.

And they, who with their Leader have conquered in the  
fight,

For ever and for ever are clothed in robes of white.

Oh ! sweet and blessed country, the home of God's elect !

Oh ! sweet and blessed country, that eager hearts expect !

Jesu, in mercy bring us to that dear land of rest ;

Who art with God the Father and Spirit ever blest.

Amen.



## QUESTIONS ON PRECIOUS STONES.

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Q. • For what are precious stones valued ?

A. For ornaments, either for persons or things.

Q. Who sent by his servant presents of jewels to his son's wife ?

A. Abraham.

Q. What was adorned with precious stones ?

A. The High Priest's breastplate.

Q. How many stones were there in the breastplate ?

A. • Twelve : according to the twelve tribes.

Q. Name them ?

A. Sardius, topaz, carbuncle, emerald, sapphire, diamond, ligure, agate, amethyst, beryl, onyx, and jasper.

Q. Who is compared with a precious stone ?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. Which is the first jewel mentioned in the Bible ?

A. • Bdelium.

Q. Was it a stone ?

*A.* No. It is a hardened juice which, when polished, was used as an ornament.

*Q.* Which is the first *stone* mentioned in Scripture?

*A.* Onyx. (Gen. ii. 12.)

*Q.* Who speaks of the precious onyx?

*A.* Job.

*Q.* What did the ancients think the onyx might be used for, as well as an ornament?

*A.* A medicine.

*Q.* Which is the hardest of precious stones?

*A.* The diamond.

*Q.* Where are diamonds obtained?

*A.* From mines.

*Q.* What colours are diamonds?

*A.* Black, white, and brown.

*Q.* What can diamonds cut?

*A.* Glass.

*Q.* Whose sin was said to be written the point of a diamond?

*A.* The sin of the people of Judah.

*Q.* What ancient people traded in diamonds?

*A.* The people of Tyre.

*Q.* Who has the largest diamond in world?

*A.* The King of Portugal.

*Q.* What destroys diamonds?

*A.* Fire.

Q. Name the hardest stone next to the diamond?

A. The sapphire.

Q. What colour is it generally?

A. Blue.

Q. Was it well known to the ancients?

A. Yes; even in Job's time. Ezekiel also speaks of it.

Q. What effect has fire upon the sapphire?

A. It turns it white.

Q. What is lapis lazuli?

A. A kind of sapphire, found in very large quantities. It somewhat resembles the blue sky and shining stars.

Q. Is there anything about this in the Bible?

A. Yes. The elders of Israel who beheld God, saw under His feet, "as it were, the paved work of a sapphire stone." Ezekiel also had a vision of the same kind.

Q. Is there anything else mentioned in the Bible about this stone?

A. Yes. It is one of the foundations of the Holy City.

Q. Where does Job say the topaz comes from?

A. Ethiopia.

Q. What is the general colour of topaz, and what colour does fire make it?

A. Yellow. But fire turns it to violet, rose-colour, and white.

Q. What colour is the emerald?

A. Green.

Q. Is it valuable?

A. Very. It was one of the stones of Eden, and is referred to by Ezekiel.

Q. To what colour is it turned by fire?

A. Blue.

Q. Where was there the largest emerald in the world?

A. In Peru. It was worshiped as an idol.

Q. What is there round about God's throne?

A. A rainbow like an emerald.

Q. What is the other name for the sardius?

A. Ruby. A rich red stone.

Q. With what does Solomon compare rubies?

A. With wisdom, which is more precious.

Q. What is beryl?

A. A light green stone.

Q. Whose body is compared by Daniel with a beryl?

A. The body of the Lord Jesus.

Q. Of what was beryl a foundation?

A. The New Jerusalem.

Q. Where in the Bible is the carbuncle mentioned?

A. In Ezekiel xxii. 13. It was also in Aaron's breastplate.

Q. How many kinds of jasper are there?

A. Two.

Q. What do some people think the jasper of the Bible means?

A. A kind of diamond.

Q. Where was one kind of jasper found?

A. Among the loose sands of the river of Egypt.

Q. How does St. John describe the appearance of God?

A. "As a jasper and a sardine stone."

Q. What does St. John say of the light of the New Jerusalem?

A. That it was "like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."

Q. What else does he say about the Holy City and this stone?

A. That the building, of the wall was of jasper, and one of the foundations was of this stone.

Q. What colour is the amethyst?

A. Violet.

Q. What does the word amethyst mean?

A. Not intoxicating. Once it was thought that drinking from an amethyst cup prevented any intoxicating effect.

Q. From whence is the word agate derived?

A. From Achates, in Sicily, where it is found in large quantities.

Q. What does Isaiah say about agates?

A. That when God restores the Jews in the



latter times, He will make the windows of their city of agates.

Q. Does the chrysoprasus melt in the fire?

A. No. It is a very hard stone.

Q. Where are the chrysoprasus, chrysolite, and chalcedony mentioned in the Bible?

A. In Rev. xxi. 19, 20 : as foundations of the Holy City.

Q. What is the sardonyx?

A. A kind of cornelian.

Q. What is required to bring out its beauty of colour?

A. Fire.

Q. What is coral?

A. The creation of millions of tiny insects, below the surface of the sea.

Q. Where does Job speak of coral?

A. In chap. xxviii. 18. Ezekiel also alludes to coral as an article of trade of Tyre and Syria.

Q. What is the ligure supposed to be?

A. A kind of jacinth, or hyacinth, of which there are many varieties.

Q. Where is jacinth mentioned?

A. By St. John in the Revelation.

Q. What are pearls?

A. A substance found inside oyster shells, supposed to be produced by disease of the fish.

Q. With what did Jesus compare the gospel?

A. With a pearl of great price.

Q. Does the pearl require polishing, like other gems, to bring out its beauties?

A. No; nothing is needed to bring out its perfection.

Q. What does St. John say of the gates of heaven?

A. That they were made of twelve pearls.

*Finis.*







